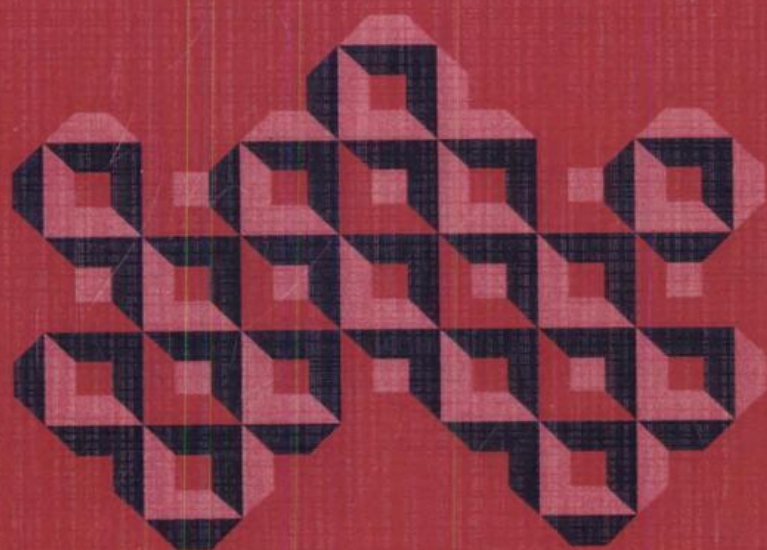


Job 28

COGNITION IN CONTEXT



EDITED BY

ELLEN VAN WOLDE

JOB 28

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JOB 28

Cognition in Context

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ELLEN VAN WOLDE



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PREFACE

On two bright spring days in Amsterdam, April 2002, not far away from the red light district, the drug scene, and people living on the edge, on the premises of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, scholars from three research areas met to discuss the topic of cognitive linguistics, Hebrew semantics, and biblical studies of the book of Job. This prestigious institute, founded in 1808 and housed in an edifice with a neoclassical temple-like facade that hides a labyrinth of spaces, rooms, and offices, has a long historical development, and is in itself a metaphor of science and art. In the wood-timbered rooms, where once Rembrandt's *Nightwatch* hung, and now pictures of famous scientists representing Dutch faces and views on knowledge and wisdom, Academy Colloquia are held to stimulate discussions in the front line of new scientific and scholarly developments. Although the style of the place does not show it, its location is justified: the meetings and discussions that take place inside represent a life under the volcano almost as much as outside.

Thus, on the Academy Colloquium 'The Book of Job: Suffering and Cognition in Context', a lava stream of new concepts and ideas from cognitive linguistics rolled over the biblical scholars. Discussion flourished and new insights were explored. The song of wisdom in Job 28, the chapter the colloquium focussed on, has as its main question "Wisdom, where can it be found?", but, sadly, it cannot be answered with: "in Amsterdam, in the Academy of Sciences". However, the question of "Who can seriously discuss it?", can positively be answered: the cognitive linguists with their knowledge of how people conceptualise and relate to their conceptual worlds, the classical Hebrew lexicographers and linguists with their knowledge of the language and its semantic values, and the biblical scholars who are experienced in the human struggle for meaning and for understanding biblical texts. The premise of this conference and of this book is that all three disciplines are needed to get a glimpse of this quest for wisdom and to understand a little bit more about the interaction of language, cognition, biblical texts in general, and the book of Job in particular.

The idea for this Academy Colloquium started in Tilburg, where the research group *Knowing and Experiencing Job (KEJ)* in the department of Biblical Studies at the Faculty of Theology has been doing research on language and cognition in the Hebrew bible for some years. The planning and programming of the colloquium was based on the idea that academic research of the book of Job may benefit from insights reached in cognitive linguistics, particularly in cognitive semantics. The colloquium's aim was formulated so as to bring together three disciplines, biblical studies, Hebrew semantics, and cognitive linguistics, in order to promote cross-fertilization. Thus, current research in the biblical exegesis of the book of Job could benefit from lexical semantics and cognitive linguistics, in particular, as concerns the contextual basis of experience and perception and the way this is expressed in language. It was felt that Hebrew semantics, which, until recently, had been very much focused on philological-comparative and historical-etymological discussions, but had expressed the need for change in the last decades, would benefit from the colloquium because cognitive semantics could contribute to a change in views on meaning and conceptualization within a cognitive and communicative model. Finally, the colloquium would be of interest for researchers within the field of cognitive linguistics, because the focus on a specific textual unit, such as the book of Job, provided them with suitable testing material for their explanatory models.

The aim and structure of the Academy Colloquium is reflected in the proceedings presented here, under title 'Job 28. Cognition in Context', which contain the papers of the speakers at the colloquium and two additional articles, by Prof. James Alfred Loader and Prof. Leo Noordman, who were invited to give their evaluations at the colloquium from the perspective of biblical exegesis and from a (psycho-)linguistic perspective, respectively. The sequence of the articles is that of the colloquium itself; the differences between the main lectures and the short papers presented in the workshops is reflected in the difference in the articles' length.

Neither the colloquium nor the proceedings would have materialized without the stimulative, accurate, and energetic work of Dr. Albert Kamp. He not only contributed to the planning, programming, and fund raising, but also did an immense amount of work in the preparation of the manuscript of these proceedings. I wish to thank him from the bottom of my heart. And if only my name is mentioned as the editor of this volume,

it is because I am the only one who can be held responsible for any (editorial) mistakes it may contain.

Another name should be added to that of Albert Kamp, viz. Mrs. Martine Wagenaar of the Royal Netherlands Academy. She did a great job in taking care of the contributors' and participants' traveling and accommodation and of the practical organization on the premises of the Academy.

A colloquium like this cannot be held without the financial support of sponsors and I wish to express my gratitude to the Faculty of Theology at the University of Tilburg, The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), the Porticus Foundation, and the Netherlands School for Advanced Studies in Theology and Religion (NOSTER). And finally, I would like to thank the Tilburg Faculty of Theology, especially its dean, Prof. Wim Weren and the Board of Governors, because they offered the academic environment for scholarly biblical research and made the organization of this colloquium possible.

Ellen van Wolde

Tilburg, 2 September 2002

WISDOM, WHO CAN FIND IT? A NON-COGNITIVE AND COGNITIVE STUDY OF JOB 28:1-11

Ellen van Wolde

Introduction

It is an extraordinary occasion when scholars from three research areas meet to discuss the topic of cognitive linguistics, Hebrew semantics, and biblical studies of the book of Job. It is also a great pleasure to concentrate on a beautiful piece of world literature, chapter 28 of the book of Job, which tells about the search for wisdom. In this introductory article, I will sketch some aspects of the first eleven verses of this text and the language in which it is written, viz., Classical Hebrew, and especially the way it reflects the (experience of the) world at the time. Figure 1 summarizes the conceptual basis of what follows (cf. Dirven, Verspoor 1998: 15).¹

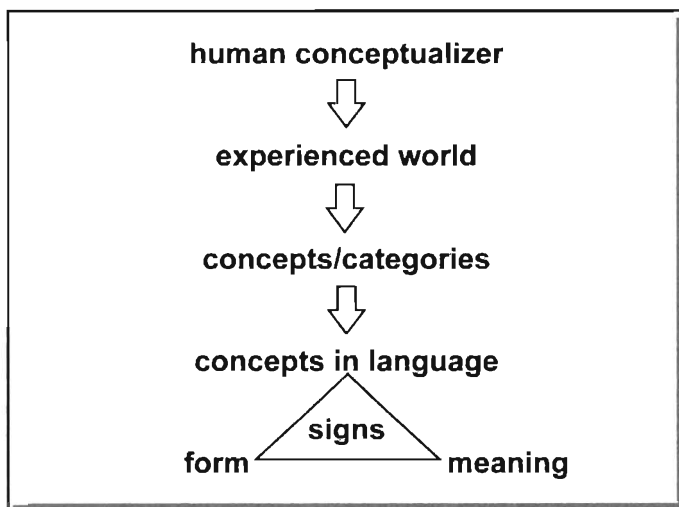


Figure 1. Model of the conceptual world.

¹ Dirven, Verspoor (1998) offer a good introduction to cognitive linguistics. My Figure 1 is based on their Table 2 (p. 15), but differs in one aspect: they make a distinction between concepts in language and pure thoughts, whereas I restrict myself to the concepts in language.

It is generally known that language does not reside in dictionaries, but in the minds of the speakers and listeners, writers and readers of that language. Therefore, in order to understand the nature of language, one also has to look at the conceptual world and how it has shaped the language signs. I will use the notion of 'concept' here as "a person's idea of what something in the world is like" (Dirven, Verspoor 1998: 14). More specifically, concepts can relate to single entities, such as the book of Job, or they can relate to a whole set of entities, such as the concept 'world literature'. Such concepts, which slice reality into relevant units, are called categories (cf. Taylor 1995). Conceptual categories are concepts of a set as a whole. Whenever we perceive something, we automatically tend to categorize it. For example, when we hear a piece of music, we automatically categorize it as rock or as classical music or as something else. Or, when we hear the name of the bible book Job, some automatically categorize it as a religious book and not as world literature, and others may categorize it as a historical book. Thus, the world is not some kind of reality existing in itself but is always shaped by our categorizing activity, i.e., by our human perception, knowledge, or/and attitude, in short, by our human experience. This does not mean that we create a subjective reality but, as a community, we agree about our intersubjective experiences. Points of reference in these categories are the prototypes or the prototypical representations of the categories (Taylor 1995: 59-80). For example, the prototypical representation in Western Europe of the category 'human being' is a white man (and not a white woman, and not a yellow woman), and in Africa a black man. The prototype of the category 'canal' in Amsterdam differs from that in Birmingham or that in Bangladesh. Therefore, in order to understand the words or linguistic signs in Job 28, attention should be paid to the conceptualization of the historically experienced world which is represented in conceptual categories, because it functions as a background against which the words in this text can be understood. Because linguistic signs relate to the way the world is conceptualised, cognitive linguistics studies these signs, be they words, texts, discourses, or grammar, as part of the conceptual world in the human mind.

The aim of this introductory article is to show some differences between a cognitive semantic study and a non-cognitive semantic approach, and to explain the usefulness of such a cognitive study for biblical studies. The intention is not to exclude the standard and generally known lexicographical study, but to introduce and include the insights of cogni-

tive linguistics. At the same time, this article may serve as an introduction to the text of Job 28, and more specifically to the text's first part, viz., Job 28:1-11. I will start with a non-cognitive lexicographical or autonomous semantic study of these verses (§ 1), and consequently provide some archeological data and historical information (§ 2), in order to concentrate on a cognitive study of this text (§ 3). The Hebrew text of Job 28 and the translation of the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are attached at the back of this volume.

1. *A non-cognitive lexicographical study of Job 28:1-11*

Job 28 presents a song of wisdom which opens with a description of mining activities in the first eleven verses. In an autonomous semantic approach, the most important words of these verses can be explained as obtaining their meaning in relationship to other words in the language system. Thus, the Classical Hebrew language system is viewed as the paradigm which defines the relationships between form and meaning, and between language sign and conceptual effect (see Figure 1: this approach concentrates on the left diagonal and is oriented from the bottom, i.e., the form-meaning relationship in the sign, towards the top, i.e., the concept). In this lexicographical way, the words in Job 28:1-11 can be studied.²

The text of Job 28 starts in v. 1a with the noun *mōšā'* (מוֹשָׁא), translated usually as 'mine', which is derived from the verb *yāšā'* (יָשָׂא). Spatial movement and orientation are two of *yāšā'*'s main distinctive features: 'to go out from', 'to leave from', or 'to go out to'.³ The noun *mōšā'* in Job 28:1 is a nominalised form of the verb and refers either to the place of going out or to the action of 'coming/going out'.⁴ The combination of the verb *yāšā'* with precious metals, especially silver and gold,

² In this semantic study reference is made to the following dictionaries and lexicons and concordance: BDB (Brown, Driver, Briggs 1979), DCH (Clines 1993-2001), Ges¹⁸ (Gesenius 1987-1995), HAL (Koehler, Baumgartner 1994-2000), THAT (Jenni, Westermann 1971-1976), TWAT (Botterweck, Ringgren 1973-1996), Even-Shoshan (1997²).

³ The verb יָשָׂא occurs very often in the Hebrew bible: 785 times in the *qal*, 278 times in the *hiph'el* and 5 times in the *hoph'al* (THAT I: 755-761, Jenni).

⁴ This noun is used 27 times in the Hebrew bible, in combination with a wide range of terms. It refers to the place of going out or to the act of going out of 'water', 'words', 'horses', 'lips', and 'morning' (Even-Shoshan 1997²: 632).

occurs four times in the Hebrew bible.⁵ Based on these four occurrences, Van Leeuwen (1986) states that the verb *yāšā* serves as a technical metallurgical term to describe the molten effluent which 'comes out' of the melting process as refined and thus ready to cast. (This verb cannot be translated with 'melting' as this is indicated in the Hebrew bible by the verb *šārap*.)⁶ And he concludes that because of the parallelism with v. 1b, the noun in Job 28:1a is likely to refer to the place where the molten silver comes out of the smelter and not to the act itself, so that v.1a can be translated as: "surely, there is for silver a place to go out."

V. 1b speaks about gold and the verb *zāqaq* (זָקַק) is used in relation to it. This verb only occurs seven times in the Hebrew bible,⁷ of which four times in the context of the purification of precious metals.⁸ In Mal. 3:3,⁹ it is used of the purification of sons and this is compared with the purification of gold and silver, so that the same context is presupposed. In Job 36:27, a drop of water is related to *zāqaq* and its meaning is uncertain;¹⁰ and, finally, in Isa. 25:6, the verb refers to the clearing of wine. We can deduce from these usages that the verb *zāqaq* denotes the aspect of purifying, either in the process of extraction of gold or silver, the pressing of wine from grapes, or in the purging of persons from sin.¹¹ Here, the subject of this action is implicit, the verb form being a third person plural, to be translated as: "they purify a gold place". It is a remarkable way of phrasing it, because the place is not the object of this action of purification, but gold is.

V. 2a describes the activity with regard to iron, and the verb used is *lāqah* (לָקַח), a very general word denoting 'to take'. It has features similar to that of English 'to take', but one difference between Classical Hebrew and English is that the meaning of 'to grasp' or 'to seize' is less

⁵ Ex. 32:24, "Aaron said: 'I threw it [the gold] in the fire and there came out (*yāšā*) this calf'."; Isa. 54:16, 'I created the smith who blows the charcoal fire and brings forth (*yāšā*) the tools for his works.'; Prov. 25:2-4, 'There is a removal of dross from silver, and a vessel goes out (*yāšā*) for the smith.'; Job 23:10, 'Would He assay me, I should come out (*yāšā*) pure as gold.'

⁶ Cf. Isa. 1:25; Zec. 13:9; Ps. 66:10; Prov. 17:3 and 27:21, and the smelter or smith is referred to by means of the particle of *šārap*, cf. Jdg. 17:4; Isa. 40:19; Jer. 10:9,14; 51:17.

⁷ The verb occurs in the *qal* in Job 28:1; 36:27; in the *pi'el* in Mal. 3:3; in the *pu'al* in Ps. 12:7; 1 Chron. 28:18; 29:4; Isa. 25:6.

⁸ Job 28:1; Ps. 12:7; 1 Chron. 28:18; 29:4.

⁹ Mal. 3:3: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness." (NRSV)

¹⁰ Job 36:27: "For he draws up the drops of water; he *distills* his mist in rain" (NRSV).

¹¹ Cf. BDB: 279 'to refine, to purify' and DCH III: 133 'to refine, to distill'.

prominent in *lāqah* than in English ‘to take’,¹² and that a ‘spatial’ aspect is more prominent in *lāqah* than in English ‘to take’: one takes from one place to another place, from another place to one’s own, takes away and carries off, takes from or out of. The verb *lāqah* stretches from the initiative and opening act to the factual taking of someone or something out of a place, or from one place to another. Here in v. 2a, it is used in collocation with the preposition ‘out of’ (*min*). Again, as in v. 1, no subject is mentioned, and the metal iron is merely presented as the object of the action: “iron is taken out of ‘dust’.”

V. 2b refers to copper and the form *yāsuq* (יָצוּק) is usually understood as a passive participle of the *qal* of the root *yāsaq* (יָצַק), ‘to pour, to cast’,¹³ but by some as a *qal yiqtol* of the root *šūq* (שָׁוַק), ‘to pour out, to melt’;¹⁴ the first form would refer to a state as the result of an action, the second to the action itself. In my view, three arguments make it most likely that the root *yāsaq* can be assumed here: 1. if it were derived from the root *šūq* emendations in the form are needed, 2. in the semantic field, words based on the same root *yāsaq* (יָצַק) refer to the activity of casting metal, viz., *yeṣuqā* (יִצְקָה), ‘casting’, *mūsaq* (מִוְצֵק), ‘casting’, and *mūseget* (מִוְצֵקֶת), ‘a cast pipe’, 3. the verb *yāsaq* occurs three times, once in Job 41:15-16¹⁵ and twice in 1 Kg. 7:16,24 in combination with copper. When connected with liquids, the verb *yāsaq* denotes the pouring out of oil, blood, water (or metaphorically it might refer to the pouring out of spirit or the pouring out of a blessing), and, more specifically, with regard to metals, reflects the process of casting metal.¹⁶ In Job 28:2b, this process is described and can be translated as “stone is cast into copper”.

The next two verses zoom in on the process of mining. How exactly is silver going out? How do people purify gold, take iron out of dust, and cast copper out of stone? Vv. 3 and 4 show it in a nice picture, almost a little film. The special character of these verses is also revealed by its syntactic structure. These are the only two verses of this chapter that consist of three clauses, whereas the other verses of Job 28 consist of two clauses. In three short shots the camera enables us to view the mining activities. But although the view is focused upon the human activities, the

¹² Cf. Schmid in THAT I: 875-879 (Schmid), TWAT IV: 16-21 (Seebass).

¹³ Cf. DCH IV: 268-269, HAL II: 428.

¹⁴ Cf. HAL III: 151 proposes to read it as a *hoph'al* of יָצַק and, in that case, this verb יָצַק occurs, according to this dictionary, twice in the Hebrew bible: here and in Job 29:6.

¹⁵ In Job 41:15-16, the firmness of the result of this casting process is stressed.

¹⁶ Ex. 25:12; 26:37; 36:36; 37:3,13; 38:5,27; 1 Kg. 7:16,23,24,30,33,46; Job 37:18; 2 Chron. 4:2,13,17.

human subject is not made explicit.¹⁷ The NRSV (see attachment to this book) has added ‘the miners’, but v. 3a literally says: “he puts an end to darkness”.

In v. 3b, the personal pronoun ‘he’ (הוא) is presented. For the first time in Job 28, a human subject is explicitly referred to. Also the verb form is remarkable: it is the only participle of this chapter. By presenting the person involved more explicitly than elsewhere, by indicating his activity in a stative and durative form, and by introducing a verb *hāqar* (חקר) which is a cognitive term referring to an activity of the mind, this clause catches the reader’s attention. The verb *hāqar* is usually used for ideas or things to be explored or to be investigated. The verb can have a spatial component: if you explore, you look carefully in a place because you are trying to find something, and it indicates that you find it after searching for it. In this spatial sense, it is obviously used in 2 Sam. 10:3, ‘to explore a city’, and in Jdg. 18:2, ‘to explore a country’. In all other occurrences in the Hebrew bible, it is used in a position parallel to knowing, understanding, and the like. It is used in this sense in Job 28:27, too. The human activity is visualized as exploration to the farthest limits or to great depths. Habel’s translation of *hāqar* is ‘to penetrate’ (Habel 1985: 396), which gives a clear picture of the activity. It maintains the spatial aspect and combines it with the imagery of ‘through’, ‘via a hole’; in English, you penetrate an area that is particularly difficult to get into or to get through, and you succeed in getting through.

Thus, in v. 3, the camera shows us a view of the mining activities: darkness is put to an end, great depths are explored, and subsequently the camera comes to rest in v. 3c on the stone, the central object, and shows it in the situation before human interference: “the stone in gloom and deep darkness.” It is dark as in the shadows of death (*salmāwet*, צלמור).

In v. 4, the camera zooms in again: how does this in v. 3 in general terms described procedure of penetration into darkness take place? Clause 4a visualizes the making of a shaft, far away from any inhabitant,¹⁸ expressed by the verb *pāraṣ* (פרץ) and the object noun *naḥal* (נחל). This verb is usually used to indicate the making of a split or breach, sometimes from the inside to the outside, indicating ‘to break

¹⁷ The subject of v. 1b is a third person masculine plural, those of v. 2a and 2b are third person singular; in vv. 3 and 4, a similar sequence of singular and plural third person masculine verb forms is present. To presuppose a divine subject in v. 3, therefore, appears unlikely in this context.

¹⁸ *Gār* (גר) is taken as a *qal* participle of גור.

out',¹⁹ but more often from the outside to the inside, as in the breaking through city walls²⁰ or the violent breaking into a house.²¹ Thus, the verb *pāraṣ* denotes the forceful action of 'breaking open' or 'breaking through'.²² The object of this action is *naḥal*, a noun which usually refers to a 'wadi' (river valley), or to the torrent seasonally filling this valley, and is rarely used in reference to a grave trench (Job 21:33) or to a tunnel (Neh 2:15).²³ The unusual usage here in Job 28:4 might be understandable when calling to mind the often steeply shaped wadis or gorges, caused by the powerful torrents pushing themselves through rock and stone. So, in this verse, the comparison is made between the forceful action of the torrent, resulting in steep wadis, and the forceful act of breaking through, resulting in steep mine shafts and galleries. V. 4a can, therefore, be translated as: "he breaks through a shaft away from habitation." The implicit subject of this action is the human being again, in v. 4a, indicated by the singular verb form ('he breaks open') in continuity with the previous verses.

However, in v. 4b, the masculine plural participle *niph'al* describes the human subject as 'the forgotten ones', and the masculine plural verb forms *dallū* (דלו) and *nā'ū* (נעו) in v. 4c have these forgotten ones as their subject. The first verb creates a difficulty, because the verb *dālal* (דלל) means 'to be poor, lowly', and, according to Geller (1987: 178, n. 9), evidence for 'to hang down' is weak.²⁴ A closer look at the word's occurrences in the Hebrew bible show that the verbs *dālal* (דלל) and *dālā* (דלה) are closely related.²⁵ The verb *dlh* (דלה) denotes: I. 'to draw water' (Ex. 2:16; 19:2), 'to draw out counsel like water' (Prov. 20:5), 'to draw up', i.e. rescue, the psalmist (Ps. 30:2).²⁶ The verb *dālal* (דלל)

¹⁹ As in a delivery, cf. Gen. 38:29, or in a population explosion, spreading in all directions (Gen. 28:14, Ex. 1:12; Isa. 54:3; Hos. 4:10, 1 Chron. 4:38; 2 Chron. 11:23).

²⁰ Cf. 2 Kg. 14:13; Prov. 25:28; 2 Chron. 25:23; 26:6; 32:5.

²¹ Cf. 2 Chron. 24:7.

²² It is known that, in Akkadian, *pe/irṣu(m)* is used both to indicate a breach or hole in a wall, or a hole in the dyke of an irrigation channel (HAL II: 972).

²³ Cf. Akkadian *naḥlu/naḥallu*. This word is glossed by Sumerian words that mean 'cave', 'mine' or 'hole in the ground'.

²⁴ Geller's main argument is: "hanging would presumably be done in vertical shafts, while the ancients seem to have had mainly horizontal ones (...). Vertical shafts were known, however." In the next section, § 2.4, the archeological data of the Timna' mines show the existence of many vertical shafts, which makes Geller's criticism less valid.

²⁵ Cf. HAL I: 221-223; Ges¹⁸ 250-251, DCH II: 437-439.

²⁶ Related to the same root are the nouns *deli* (דלי), 'bucket', and *dallū* (דלה), 'loose hair' (Song. 7:6).

denotes: I. ‘to be low, poor, little’,²⁷ II. ‘to hang down’ of a leg of a cripple (Prov. 26:7). Based on the root *dal* (דל), ‘low’ or ‘poor’, both verbs appear to denote an aspect of being low. And from the image of a bucket hanging down in a well, and the metaphorical extension in Prov. 26:7 referring to the legs of the lame which hang down powerless, the image depicted here in Job 28:4 appears to be clear: it shows us the miners who hang low and dangle powerless in the shafts ‘away from people’. The consequent verb *nā‘ū* (נעו) then reflects their quivering, waving or swinging to and fro in those shafts.²⁸ Who these people are and why they are described like this remains unclear. It must be concluded, however, that the subject differs: the first clause (v. 4a) depicts the activity of breaking through shafts and galleries by a singular subject, and the second and third clauses (v. 4b-c) show a plural subject: those who hang down there, remote, far away from other people, and forgotten by them.

In vv. 5-6, the vantage point changes: the camera no longer focuses upon the people, but on the earth: “the earth, out of it comes bread”. We know of course that people make bread from things that grow on earth, but it is presented here as if the earth is the producer. In v. 5b, the earth is also profiled: “underneath it (=the earth) it is turned/transformed as by fire”. The mining activities described in the first verses turn out to have consequences for the earth. The verb *hāpak* (הפך) denotes a complete overturn.²⁹ the earth is devastated, depicted as if the fire had attacked and transformed it. Whereas, for the human being, the mines mean food, for the earth, it is destruction. The precious minerals, such as sapphire and the gold dust, is the earth’s (v. 6).

In vv. 7 and 8, the camera shows the view from above the earth, the vultures, the birds with the best eyes and knowledge of holes in mountains, have no idea of the path to the earth’s treasures. Other animals are also referred to, although there are different views as to which animal the noun *sāhaš* (שׂהשׁ) refers: because of the root *šhš*, which denotes pride or conceit, most opt for a denotation of proud or wild animals. Mowinckel (1963), on the other hand, argues that it refers to a (mythological) reptilian creature, and Geller (1987: notes 12 and 14) provides some additional

²⁷ Jdg. 6:6, Isa. 17:4, Isa. 19:6, Ps. 79:8, 116:6; 142:7.

²⁸ Cf. BDB 631: ‘to quiver, wave, tremble’; DCH V: 644: ‘tremble’, TWAT V: 315-318 (Ringgren): ‘sich hin und her bewegen’, ‘schwanken, wanken, taumeln’.

²⁹ This verb is used in contexts of complete destruction, such as the flood story in Gen. 6-9, the annihilation of Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen. 15, and the threat of a total overturn of Nineveh in Jonah 4 (cf. Kamp 2002: 215).

arguments to support this view, and translates v. 8 as: 'the reptiles and snakes have never traced it'. In my view, the lack of sufficient semantic data makes it impossible to build a conclusive argument, although the parallelism of v. 8a and v. 8b (with *šāḥal* (לִשְׁחַל), 'lion'), makes a translation of *šāḥaš* with 'wild animal' possible.

In vv. 9-11, the camera swings to the human being again and shows once more his activities with verbs in the third person singular. The NRSV has changed the singular form to a plural form. However, the Hebrew text literally says: "he puts his hands ... he overturns ... he cuts out ... his eyes see ... he probes ... he brings to light." The verbs used in v. 9 to describe these activities are *šālah yad* (שָׁלַח יָד), 'to stretch out his hand',³⁰ which is generally used with a powerful person as its subject, and the verb *hāpak* (הִפָּךְ), 'to overturn', is used for the second time (before in v. 5), in a still stronger and imaginative way: the human being overturns the mountains by the roots. Thus, the transformation mentioned twice is essential to the text.

The verb *bāqā* (בָּקַע) in v. 10, when used in the *qal*, denotes 'to cleave, break open/through', 'to split (open) or penetrate',³¹ but is used in the *pi'el* here, and expresses an even more complete or more violent action: 'to cleave, cut to pieces', 'to rip open', 'to tear apart'.³² It is sometimes used in the Hebrew bible with a divine subject,³³ or with animals as subject,³⁴ or with human subjects.³⁵ In all these cases, it refers to a forceful action of splitting open, carving through, ripping open by a person, the deity, or an animal in the subject position. The object with which it is used here is *ye'ōrīm* (יְאוֹרִים), which usually refers to the stream of the

³⁰ The usages of this collocation in the Hebrew bible make reference to the aims of this stretching out of one's hand either as 'to take into possession' (e.g., Ex. 22:7,10; Ps. 125:3; Est. 9:10,15,16) or 'to destroy, to kill' (e.g., Gen. 37:22; 1 Sam. 24:7,11; 26:9,11,23; Ps. 44:21; Neh 13:21).

³¹ Ges¹⁸ 168-169: 'spalten', Jdg. 15:19; Isa. 48:21 ('Felsen'); Qoh. 10:9 ('Holz'); Ex. 14:16 ('Meer'). DCH II: 248: 'to split' ('to split open, penetrate, invade') and 'to hatch eggs'.

³² BDB 132, DCH II: 249, Ges¹⁸ 169.

³³ Ez. 13:13: God says that He will 'let loose' hurricane winds; Hab. 3:9: He will make the earth 'split open' into streams; Ps. 78:13: He 'splits' the sea; Ps. 78:15: He 'splits' rocks in the wilderness.

³⁴ 2 Kg. 2:24: two bears 'mangle' forty-two children; Hos. 13:8: the beasts of the field 'tear' people 'apart'.

³⁵ Gen. 22:3: Abram 'splits' the wood; 1 Sam. 6:14: they 'split' the wood; 2 Kg. 8:12; 15:16: Hazael and Menahem 'rip open' pregnant women.

Nile,³⁶ and, when used in the plural, to Nile arms and Nile canals,³⁷ and sometimes to watercourses in general.³⁸ Its meaning here is not clear.

The verb *hābaš* (חָבַשׁ) denotes in the *qal* 'to bind', 'to bind on', or 'to bind up', in the sense of to bind up a wound,³⁹ to saddle an ass,⁴⁰ or tie on a cap or turban.⁴¹ The imagery is clear: it refers to the binding (up) of something (a wound, an ass, a head) with a bandage, saddle, or turban. The *pi'el* form of this verb occurs only here and in Ps. 147:3. In the Psalm, the object is an injury, so that the meaning of 'binding up' remains obvious. Only here, in Job 28:11, it is used with *nehārōt* (נְהָרוֹת), 'rivers' as object, possibly in the sense of 'to dam (up)',⁴² so that v. 11a can be translated as: "He dams up the sources of the rivers."

In the last clause, 11b, the object 'hidden things' is more abstract than those before: no minerals, stones, or waters are mentioned but only the more general concept of 'hidden thing'. The expression *yāsā' ōr* (אָר צִא) 'to bring to light', is abstract, too, so that we might conclude that v. 11b summarizes the activities described previously in general terms as 'bringing to light hidden things'.

Having thus shortly described most verbs used in the first verses of Job 28 from an autonomous semantic point of view, a description which is based upon the view that words are defined in relationship to other words in the Classical Hebrew language system and that their function in this language paradigm determines their meaning, some conclusions can be drawn. The main conclusion is that most verbs denote 'to grasp, take out, break through, break open', suggesting powerful or even violent action. Another important conclusion is that this activity of grasping and taking away always regards the earth, the original environment from which everything is taken away. Silver, gold, iron, copper, precious stones, they belong to the earth, as the text shows, but they are taken away from it by procedures of breaking and shaft digging, by turning mountains upside down. This is visible almost in every verse, implicitly

³⁶ It might even be an Egyptian loan word, see BDB 384.

³⁷ The term *אֵר* occurs 45 times in the Hebrew bible in the singular referring to the Nile; 16 times it is used in the plural to refer to streams or canals of the Nile and four times to the Tigris (TWAT IV: 385-390, Eising).

³⁸ DCH IV: 71-72.

³⁹ E.g., Isa. 30:26; 61:1; Ez. 30:21; Hos. 6:1.

⁴⁰ E.g., Gen. 22:3; Num. 22:21; 2 Sam. 17:23; 19:27.

⁴¹ E.g., Ex. 29:9; Lev. 8:13; Ez. 24:17.

⁴² DCH IV: 157.

or explicitly, either in the preposition *min* (מִן), ‘from’ or ‘out’, or in the verbs such as ‘to grasp from’ or ‘to take out’.

2. *Archeological and historical information*

The words in Job 28:1-11 represent a conceptualization of an experienced world, and the author or redactor of this text chose to describe the phenomenon of mining as a background against which to profile the topic of wisdom (see vv. 12-14: “Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?”). In order to understand the conceptualization of mining and its relationship to wisdom, additional historical information is needed about the mining activities at that time and place.

2.1 *Silver*

In the ancient Near East, silver technology developed around the fourth millennium BCF (Redford 2001, 286-287). In Egypt, silver was more valuable than gold until the middle of the second millennium BCE, and the relative value was 2:1. The value of silver then diminished, a result perhaps of increased production and its consequent devaluation in the ancient world’s trade market.

The ancient Near East was an area rich in galena, an argentiferous lead ore from which silver was extracted through cupellation, that is, a method of separating noble metals (e.g., silver or gold) from base metals (e.g. lead) by melting the mixture with a blast of hot air in a shallow porous dish (the cupel). The base metals are oxidized, the oxide being carried away by the blast of air or absorbed by the porous container (Dictionary of Science 1999). Thus, the ancient Near Eastern procedure of extracting silver consisted of three stages. First, argentiferous lead ore was broken from stone. Then, the lead was separated from the ore by heating up: oxygen was added by blowing through tubes and, by a heating process with additional oxidation, lead oxide melted and dripped through the porous bottom of the cupel and the non-oxidated silver remained as a metal. The temperatures required were relatively low (800⁰ C), as was the yield: a tonne of smelted ore resulted in only a few ounces of silver (Redford 2001: 287). Finally, the silver was cast into an artisan mould, and made into coinage or converted into luxury items.

Therefore, the Hebrew word *mōšā'* used in Job 28:1 can either refer to this procedure of silver extraction or to the place where this extraction was made.

2. 2 *Gold*

In the ancient Near East, two types of gold recovery were known: alluvial gold and gold ore.⁴³ The first, alluvial gold, was found in placers, which originated in running waters which leave behind deposits of erosion material which consists of a relatively high percentage of ore. The gold in these placers appears either in the form of dust or of nuggets. In Egypt and Nubia (Sudan), much gold was found in the Nile Valley and in the Eastern Desert in the South adjacent to the Red Sea; the gold of Kush was derived from the region south of the Second cataract; gold placers were found in Egypt, Turkey, and Greece. The simplest form of gold recovery is panning in streams and wadis for placer deposits.⁴⁴ The procedure of extraction is that of washing in a pan or sieve. Sometimes the boulder-riffle method of concentrating the gold was used. In this method, boulders were arranged in such a way that, as the water rushed along carrying the gold, it swirled around the boulders, depositing the nuggets and dust in the slack-water zones around and between the boulders. After an appropriate interval, the sluicing water was turned off or diverted to allow the clean-up. These 'washeries' are depicted on walls and tablets in Egyptian tombs and can be seen in a dilapidated condition in a number of ancient mining regions in Greece, Egypt and the ancient Near East.

In Egypt, from the New Kingdom onwards, the development of gold mining started. Open cut methods were, later on, replaced by underground mining. Rocks with gold ore were hammered with picks. Promising veins were followed deep into hillsides through dark, narrow tunnels. This harsh work was done by slaves, criminals, and captives. There is some evidence that fire was used to create fissures in the stone, to aid in the removal of large chunks of quartz; the pieces were then transported to

⁴³ Egypt and Nubia (Sudan) were rich in both alluvial gold and gold ore. The word Nubia may, in fact, derive from the ancient Egyptian word *nbw*, which means 'gold' (Redford 2001: 34).

⁴⁴ For a description of metallurgy in ancient Egypt, see: Lucas, Harris 1999⁴. For a technical metallurgical description of mining activities from the Iron Age until the Classical period, see: <www.kanada.net/alluvial/goldClassic.html>.

the open air where another team pounded the stones into smaller bits. The small fragments were ground into a gritty powder by older men and women, and the product was washed over a sloping table to separate the quartz from the gold (Redford 2001: 35). The gold dust was then placed in a cupel and melted with lead. In this cupellation procedure the lead stripped out the gold's major impurities and was absorbed into the cupel's porous walls. The button of gold left behind is known as a prill (<www.cambriangoldfields.co.uk>).

The Hebrew word *zāqaq*, used in Job 28:1, can either refer to the gold placers and the washing procedure, or to the gold mines and the excavation procedure followed by methods of crushing, grinding, washing and cupellation. A translation of 'distillation' or 'refinement' does not really describe this process, because it derives from modern methods of gold extraction. Rather late in history, a technique was developed by which gold was amalgamated with a copper-mercury alloy; the mercury retains the gold in the form of a gold amalgamation and afterwards the mercury is distillate so that pure solid gold remains. This procedure to use another metals (sometimes even cyanide) is called 'distillation' of gold. Refinement of gold refers to the procedure by which gold refiners create the standard gold alloys so that the gold becomes exactly the right caratage (<www.cambriangoldfields.co.uk>). Therefore, Job 28:1b does not refer to the two modern stages of distillation and refinement, but either to the process of finding placers, where gold was washed out, or, to gold ore, where gold was purified after a long mining process.

2.3 Iron

The high temperatures required to smelt iron from ore and the difficulties in working it kept it from being used as a metal in the ancient Near East before the end of the second millennium BCE.⁴⁵ The Hittite Empire, in iron-rich Anatolia, appears to be the earliest home of large-scale iron working. The technology might have been introduced much later into both Egypt and Nubia by Greek mercenaries. Known is, that iron was produced in large quantities in Nubia: vast iron slag heaps are found at Meroë (Nubia) and an iron foundry was excavated in the ancient town

⁴⁵ Only meteoric iron, that is, iron obtained from meteorites, was known and used earlier (e.g., in the famous dagger from the tomb of Tutankhamun).

(Tylecote 1992). The production of iron requires very high temperatures (1200⁰ C) to separate the metal from the rest of the ore, and necessitates a change from open-bowl furnaces to shaft furnaces. Ancient furnaces then produced the metal by mixing the ore with charcoal and firing it to produce a 'bloom'- a lump of iron, slag, and charcoal. The cooled iron would be broken up and hammered into shape, or remelted. Thus, the iron was not really melted into a liquid, but resulted in a kind of grains and these iron grains were worked and reworked. By quenching, i.e., plunging hot iron into cold water, the iron could be made hard and it could be shaped by hammering or reheating (Redford 2001: 182-183).

In Job 28:2, it is said that iron is 'taken out of dust'. Archeological information teaches us that we should not imagine iron as we know it, melted into a liquid in blast-furnaces, but as grains of iron, hammered into shape. The procedure of 'taking out' may either describe in general terms the procedure of iron working or may refer to the extraction procedure of iron from ore, in which the heating of the ore or earth material made it possible to take iron out in grains or lump forms. Probably it is better to translate 'āfār (עפר) as '(earth) material' or 'ore', than as 'dust'.

2.4 Copper

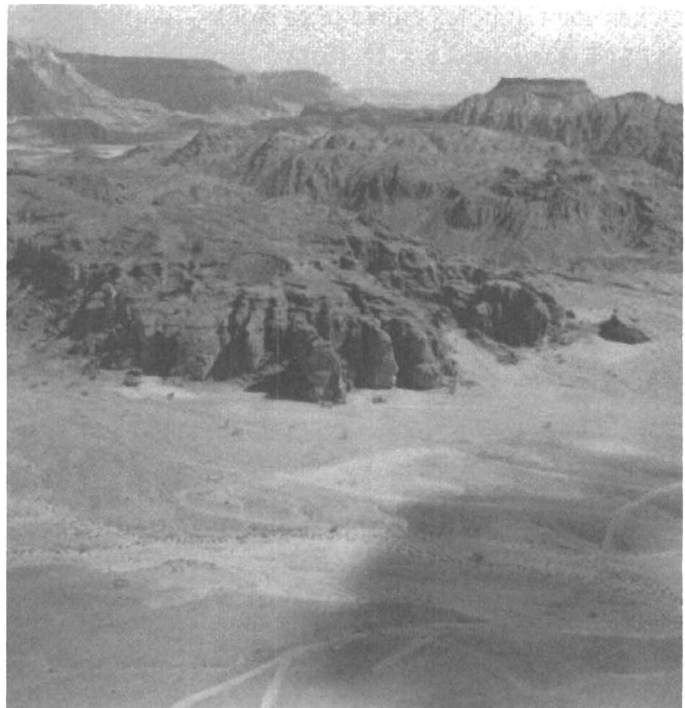
In the ancient Near East, both native copper and copper ores are found. Native copper is copper available and found in nature which only required hammering to shape it. Copper-bearing ores are also known from a very early age. Copper was extracted by mining and heating. Because the temperature required to smelt copper is only 800⁰ C, this was well within the range of the early ovens that were used to bake bread and ceramics. Vast quantities of copper came from the Sinai and the Negev (Redford 2001: 295; 415).

We know much more about ancient copper mining because of the copper mines found in the Timna' Valley in the 'Arabah, a 175 km. long and extremely dry strip of land in the South Negev (some 30 kilometres north of the Gulf of Elath-Aqabah), 'an eternal no-man's land', as Rothenberg (1972: 10) calls it. In an area of about 70 square kilometres and containing four valleys, the 300 metre high Timna' cliffs run into the 'Arabah. Along the foot of the cliffs, within a white sandstone formation, are copper ore nodules which were exploited in ancient times. Eleven camps, located in the centre of the valley, show holes and shafts, work-

shops with crushing platforms, and smelting furnaces, tool heaps and slag heaps, which testify to the existence of intensive copper-smelting activities. These mines were excavated in the 'Arabah expedition from 1959-1970, lead by Beno Rothenberg and his team. He analyzed and published the archeological and metallurgical data, and revealed that the remains of the mining activities belong mainly to the period of the (Early and) Late Bronze Age to Iron Age I, although also Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine copper smelting places and mines have been found; flint tools were found everywhere. Some photographs of this area will enable us to picture the site. The following information is based on Rothenberg's archeological report and pictures.⁴⁶

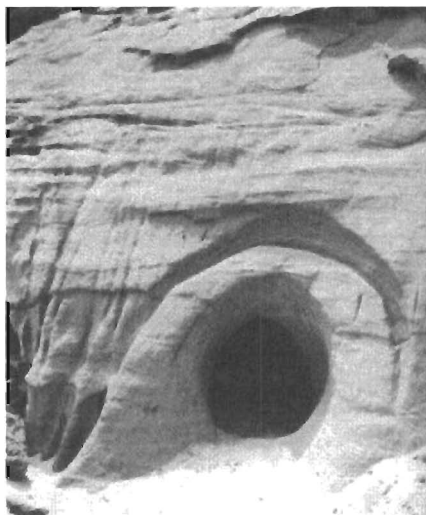
Picture A (Rothenberg 1972: pl. 1) shows an overview of the area: the Timna' Valley, in the Negev desert, far away from habitation, and the cliffs. At the lower parts of these cliffs, the holes are still visible which were the entrances to underground mining systems (**picture B**, Rothenberg 1972: pl. 3). Archeological research of this area revealed different elements of mining technology in the periods indicated above:

Picture A.



⁴⁶ B. Rothenberg was so kind to give permission for the reproduction of the photographs of the area and the excavations.

Picture B.



1. Deep shafts, some more than 20 metres deep, were carved vertically into the cupriferous white sandstone formations. The rock-cut shaft of site 212 (**picture C**, Rothenberg 1978: p. 1202) is 21 metres deep, with niches for footholes cut into its sides. Another photograph shows a deep shaft of site 9 (**picture D**, Rothenberg 1972: pl. 18): all round the mouth are the marks made by ropes scouring the surface as persons and buckets were raised and lowered (**picture E** shows how it might have functioned).⁴⁷



Picture C.



Picture D.

⁴⁷ This picture shows a mining engineer in a medieval mine in the Peak District, Derbyshire, England. See: <www.tidza.demon.co.uk>.

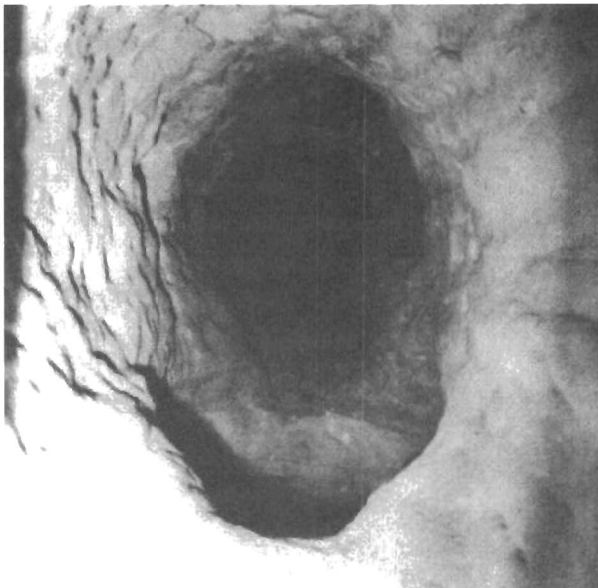


Picture E.



2. Narrow galleries (about 70 centimetres wide and 1 metre high), were driven horizontally into the white rock; they branched and sometimes widened out underground (**picture F**, Rothenberg 1978: 1202). One system of galleries had two superimposed levels, or floors, connected by a narrow shaft. One of the problems in mining technology was ventilation. Other problems were light and drainage. Especially (sub)soil water was one of the biggest problems to solve; only the Romans succeeded to manage the underground streams by using waterwheels (Forbes 1962: 218).

Picture F.



Picture G.



3. Rocks with copper ore were hammered with flint tools and picks, deep into hillsides through dark, narrow tunnels. This harsh work was done by slaves, criminals, and captives. The pieces were then transported to the open air in buckets. Above the ground, another team (usually women), pounded the stones into smaller bits.

4. The crushed bits were subsequently thrown into a smelting furnace (**picture G**, Rothenberg 1972: 35) and heated by charcoal. Through heating the smelted copper, slag was tapped into well-prepared tapping pits. The slag tapped out of the furnaces was crushed to extract the metallic copper pellets entrapped in the slag.

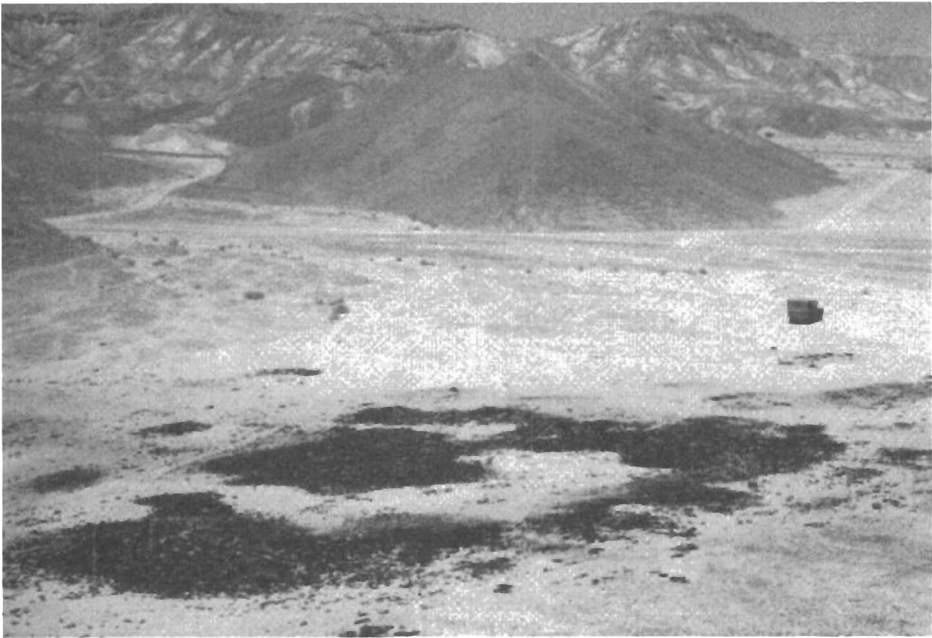
5. These pellets were heated in casting furnaces (**picture H**, Rothenberg 1972: pl. 39), melted in small crucibles (**picture I**, Rothenberg 1972: pl. 41) and, consequently, the copper was cast into small copper objects.



Picture H.

Picture I.





Picture J.

6. Huge slag heaps were the result of this mining process, and they are still visible today, as this picture from the air shows (**picture J**, Rothenberg 1972: pl. 119): the dark areas are smelting slags on the site of the copper furnaces and, in the background, the Timna' Cliffs can be seen with empty holes, the ancient copper mines, at their foot.

The copper mines of Timna' show us the ancient Near Eastern copper manufacturing procedures. In Job 28:2, the verb *yāšaq* refers to the fifth and last stage in actual copper extraction, to be translated as 'casting' of copper or 'pouring into a mould'.

2.5 Conclusions

The historical and archaeological data make it possible for us to construe another imagery of the text. As a result some details provided by the lexicographical or autonomous semantic study can be corrected.

The first element is the flint stone in v. 9, translated by the NRSV as "they put their hand to flinty rock". However, the many flint tools found in the mining areas demonstrate that reference is made to the equipment,

the flint tool in the worker's hand. It should therefore be translated as: "he stretches out his hand with flint tools."

A second element regards v. 1a and the term *mōšā*' (מוֹשָׂא) used in relationship to silver. It is usually understood as a reference to the bringing out of the metal and translated as 'mine'. In his lexicographical study of the four texts in the Hebrew bible in which the verb *yāšā*' (יָצָא) was used in combination with precious metals, Van Leeuwen (1986) states that this verb serves as a technical metallurgical term to describe the molten metal effluent which 'comes out' of the smelting process. "Metals «come out» of the smelter purified." he literally says (Van Leeuwen 1986:113). However, ancient Near Eastern metallurgical information taught us that in the procedure of cupellation the precious metals, such as silver and gold, remained in the cupel, whereas the base metal lead 'came out'. Silver is not 'the molten metal effluent' as Van Leeuwen calls it. Therefore, the verb *yāšā*' cannot refer to this melting procedure, nor can the noun *mōšā*' refer to the smelter. It can, however, be explained as a general term, and not as a technical metallurgical term, which is used here to evoke an image of the process of silver extraction as a whole, without actually pointing at specific details such as breaking and crushing argentiferous ore, cupellation, or casting. With this knowledge in mind, a scrutiny of the four texts in the Hebrew bible Van Leeuwen refers to (see above note 5), confirms that the verb *yāšā*' refers to the general extraction process and that it stresses the result of this process, viz., the calf (Ex. 32:24), the tools (Isa. 54:16), the vessel (Prov. 25:2-4) and the pureness of the final product (Job 23:10). In other words, the word *yāšā*' sums the whole procedure and its final product up in one word.

Another problem so far unresolved, viz., to whom 'the forgotten ones' in v. 4b refers, can be elucidated now. Usually, and correctly so, these were understood as the miners who work in the shafts and galleries. But why are they called the forgotten ones? Historical and archeological research has taught us that the people who worked underground were criminals, slaves, and captives. They were forced to do this awful work. These people are not the same as those who live on the ground in the mining camps, and who are responsible for the crushing, melting, and casting and the preparatory work. Thus the difference between the subjects of clause 4a (on the ground), and those of 4b (in the ground) corresponds with the difference in function.

New light can also be thrown on a fourth element, viz., the term *ye'ōrīm* (יְאוֹרִים), 'streams or canals of the Nile' or, sometimes, 'water courses' in general, which occurs in v. 10a as an object of the verb *bāqā'* (בָּקַע), 'to cleave'. These *ye'ōrīm* might refer to the subsoil water streams, which result from the not yet mastered process of drainage in the mines. If this is the case, v. 10a expresses the forceful action of splitting open or carving through the rocks, with the side-effect of the underground water-streams.

Another aspect we understand better now is the verb *hābaš* (חָבַשׁ), 'to bind up', in v. 11a which was, from an autonomous semantic point of view, difficult to understand. Historical information taught us about gold placers and the way alluvial gold is retrieved. At the washeries, the boulder-riffle method was sometimes used, in which boulders were arranged in such a way that, as the water rushed along carrying the gold, it swirled around the boulders, depositing the nuggets and dust in the slack-water zones around and between the boulders. Rivers were dammed up, sluiced, or diverted to allow this purification. V. 11a could refer to this activity, and can, therefore, be translated as: "He dams up the sources of the rivers." In this sense, v. 11a refers back to v. 1b, the gold placers and washeries. This parallelism between v. 1b and v. 11a corresponds with that between v. 1a and v. 11b, as is clearly visible in the use of the same verb: *yāšā'* (יָצָא), 'to go out', in v. 11b and *mōšā'* (מוֹצָא), 'the place or act of going out' of silver, in v. 1a.

These data result in the following literal translation of Job 28:1-11:

*Surely there is for silver a place to go out
and a place(r) of gold they purify.
Iron is taken out of earth material,
and copper is cast from stone.
He puts an end to darkness,
he is penetrating to great depths,
stone in gloom and deep darkness.
He breaks through a shaft away from habitation,
the forgotten ones, off their feet,
they hang low far away from people and swing to and fro.
The earth, out of it comes food,
but from beneath it, it is overturned as by fire.
Its stones are the place of sapphire,*

*its is the dust of gold.
 A path which no vulture knows,
 and the hawk's eye has never scanned,
 the wild animals have not trodden it,
 the lion has not passed over it.
 He stretches out his hand with flint tools,
 he overturns mountains by the roots.
 He cleaves in the rocks underground streams,
 his eye sees every precious material.
 He dams up the sources of the rivers,
 he brings hidden things to light.*

3. *A cognitive linguistic study*

Cognitive linguists consider language as an expression of cognition and aim to describe the relation between language and human cognition. In the following cognitive linguistic study of Job 28:1-11, I will concentrate on the question of how the words in Job 28:1-11, that represent a conceptualization or cognitive processing of the experienced world in the second half of the first millennium BCE, form the setting in which this text can be understood. In this cognitive linguistic study three aspects will be explored: 1. 'figure' and 'ground', 2. prototypical language, and 3. a prototypical scenario.

3.1 *Figure and ground*

In order to describe the text's cognitive setting and the words profiled in it from a cognitive linguistic perspective, an important concept developed by Ronald Langacker in his monumental *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar* should be introduced here (Langacker 1987, 1991). He showed that meaning is not a single word or thought, but the interaction between at least two elements, 'profile' and 'base': something is profiled on a base, and the 'profile' stands out in bas-relief against the 'base'.⁴⁸ Thus, language is first and foremost considered as a conceptual organization, in

⁴⁸ For a description of 'profile' and 'base' and of 'figure' and 'ground', see: Langacker 1987: 183-189; 1988: 58-63. See also Ungerer, Schmid 1996: 156-204.

which words get their meaning by profiling a certain entity on a certain base, in which sentences get their meaning by nominal or relational predication within a certain larger configuration or cognitive domain, and in which a cognitive domain is the selection of the linguistically relevant portion of our knowledge and experience.

A specification of the general 'profile – base' or 'continuous scale of prominence' principle is the 'figure – ground' alignment, which is restricted here to its usage in the construal of an image in a text. For example, in locative relations like in 'The book is on the table', the book is conceptualized as the figure, and the table as the ground (Ungerer, Schmid 1996: 156). In order to construe a particular scene in a text, a writer must decide to which of the constituent elements (s)he wishes to allot a more prominent role and which should be used to build up the setting: which element is imagined as, or construed as, the 'figure' or point of salience within the 'ground', and receives its meaning through interaction with the 'ground'. This interaction constitutes the text's spatial organization and allows the readers to visualize or construe a visual mental image of the text as a multilayered spatial environment.

Closely related to the dependence of linguistic structure on conceptualization is Langacker's view on the conceptualiser's perspective. Just as meanings are defined relative to cognitive domains, particular linguistic choices are often found to hinge upon the vantage point from which a given situation is viewed. Meaning does not reside solely in the inherent properties of the entity or situation it describes, but crucially involves the way we choose to think about this entity or situation and mentally portray it. Expressions such as (a) 'This roof slopes upward' and (a') 'This roof slopes downward'; or (b) 'Louise resembles Rebecca' and (b') 'Rebecca resembles Louise' are true under the same conditions, but represent alternate ways of mentally construing the same objective circumstances (Langacker 1988: 7). That is why the term 'imagery' is important. It indicates our ability to mentally construe a conceived situation in alternate ways. In choosing a particular expression or construction, a speaker or writer construes the conceived situation in a certain way, i.e., (s)he selects one particular image from a range of alternatives to structure its conceptual content for expressive purposes.

In Job 28, the text appears to deal with the search for wisdom, but it starts with a description of mining. Or, to put it in visual terms, the film starts, and shows a picture of mining activities. These are placed downstage: we

see a place where silver is coming out and where gold is purified, we see iron taking out and copper cast. Then the camera shows mine shafts and people hanging there. Thus, the text construes an image in which the mining activities feature prominently and constitute the foreground in the reader's imagery or mental representation of the text. Subsequently, the topic of wisdom is introduced and forms the ground that interacts with the figure of mining. However, it might also be the other way around: Job 28 starts with a description of the ground (mining activities) and then highlights the main topic (wisdom) against this (back)ground. In other words, what is most prominent on the scale of prominency?

One element in the text may illustrate this double option. After the presentation of the mining activities in vv. 1-3a, the verb *hāqar*, 'to explore' or 'to investigate', is used in v. 3b. As said before, this verb is a cognitive term, referring to an activity of the mind: it functions in Classical Hebrew in the semantic (source) domain of exploration and investigation, but is transferred here to the semantic (target) domain of mining activities. This metaphorical use of the verb *hāqar* might be confirmed by its syntactic form: all other nineteen verb forms are either in the *yiqtol* or *qatal*, only here, the participle *hōqēr*, with the explicit subject 'he' is presented as distinct from the other verb forms. This participle profiles the subject itself; the subject is attributed to a domain which defines him completely: he is a person who explores, investigates and penetrates, 'he penetrates to great depths'. The metaphorical option of this only verb can be understood to cover the whole text of Job 28:1-11, and makes that all activities described can be viewed not only in a concrete meaning, but also in a metaphorical sense.

This explains why two options are possible in reading and understanding Job 28: 1-11: the first is that the image of mining is the prominent figure in this text, and the image of wisdom is its setting or ground; the second is that the image of wisdom and cognition is the most prominent figure in this text, and mining is just an example which functions as the ground on which wisdom is profiled. We might even see the two options at the same time, like the face/vase illusion (Figure 2, after Rubin).⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Ungerer, Schmid (1996: 157, Figure 4.1) show Rubin's figure.



Option 1: wisdom as ground and mining as figure



Option 2: wisdom as figure and mining as ground

Figure 2.

In the first option, wisdom is the ground and mining the figure. Then Job 28:1-11 tells us about mining activities, and creates an imagery that has been elucidated by means of archeological data. This is what humans are able to do: these mining activities are the most intriguing and the best activities a human can engage in. He can find the most precious elements and build shafts, but he cannot find wisdom. It may be compared, in our days, with the genetic code: people can determine the human genome, but wisdom they cannot find.

The second option shows that the text of Job 28:1-11 may be conceptualized differently, with wisdom as the profile and mining as the ground. The author of Job 28 made the choice to describe wisdom against the background of mining. We, in the Western European culture, would not so easily relate wisdom to mining, unless we talk of digging for information and data mining on the Internet. In our culture, wisdom is prototypically related to sitting and thinking, to reflection. In postmodern times, we conceive it also not as something that is there to be found by us, but as constructed and deconstructed by ourselves. Here it is described against the background of a spatial category and as a transitive activity. The category of space is visible in the prominent position of 'place', and, in addition to that, in the prominent position of 'verticality', whereas 'horizontality' is almost absent. This is also visible in the prepositions 'under', 'from', 'out', or 'from underneath', and in the verbs, such as 'to overturn'. Thus, wisdom is conceptualized as 'something down there', something to be dug up, to be found, not, for example, as something found at the top of a high mountain. It is remarkable that, in the Hebrew bible, wisdom is sometimes represented as something to be found in heaven and, at other times, as something deep down, like here in Job 28. Within this vertical and spatial categorization, Job 28 uses aspects of mining to describe wisdom.

3.2 *Prototypical language*

The non-cognitive linguistic study or autonomous semantic approach started with a word and tried to discover the various meanings it may have. In the terminology of Geeraerts, this can be called a 'semasiological analysis', and it reflects on the left diagonal between linguistic sign and concept in Figure 1, with an orientation from the linguistic sign towards the concept (Geeraerts 1988: 207-209; Dirven, Verspoor 1998: 25-50). Thus, meaning is studied as a conventional link between language form and its meaning(s), and the dictionary shows the forms in their relationship to specific meanings. Above I explained that categories, e.g., the category of canal, have prototypical or central members and more marginal or peripheral members. This principle does not only apply to the members of a category, but also to the various meanings of a word form. The question then is: how can we tell which meaning of a word form like *zāqaq* or *pāraṣ* is the most central? In order to establish the

salience of a meaning, a statistical count can be made as to which use is the most frequent, or a study can be made of which meaning is the more basic in its capacity to clarify the other meanings (Dirven, Verspoor 1998: 31). The most salient meanings are the centre of semantic cohesion in the category: they hold the category together by making the other meanings accessible to our understanding. Thus, centrality effects or prototypicality effects mean that some elements in a category are far more conspicuous or salient, or more frequently used than others. This concept of saliency is an application of the general figure-ground category. It shows that the figure-ground distinction functions on every level of the language, be it word, clause, concept, category, grammar, or dictionary.

Prototypicality effects occur not only at the level of meaning but also at the level of referents (cf. Taylor 1995: 38-80). When Northern Europeans are asked to name fruits, they are more likely to name apples and oranges than avocados or pomegranates, whereas Southern European would name figs. Therefore, if we are to count the actual uses of words in a Northern European context, references to apples or oranges are likely to be more frequent than references to mangoes (Dirven, Verspoor 1998: 31). Or, in the Hebrew bible, when metals are presented, gold and silver, copper and iron come more easily to mind than aluminium and steel. Actually, statistical research shows that the metal silver is most frequently referred to in the Hebrew bible, then gold, copper, and finally iron.⁵⁰ Other metals referred to are lead, tin, and bronze. With reference to Job 28:1-2, it may be concluded that the most prototypical members of the category of 'precious metals' are mentioned.⁵¹ And not only the presented metals are the most salient representatives of the category of 'precious metal', also the order of presentation is prototypical. When in the Hebrew bible precious metals are mentioned, the sequence usually begins with the metal considered to be the most precious one, that is most often silver, then the second best, gold, and it ends with iron and copper. The effect of the presentation of the most prototypical series of precious

⁵⁰ Silver occurs 403 times in the Hebrew bible, gold 387 times, iron 76 times, and copper 140 times. The collocation of silver and gold occurs 146 times in the Hebrew bible: 57 times gold precedes silver, 89 times silver precedes gold. The collocation of gold and copper occurs 20 times; the collocation of gold and iron occurs 11 times, that of gold and lead occurs twice, that of gold and tin once, and that of gold and glass once. See also Katz (1992: 854-855) for a survey of the usages of metals in the Hebrew bible.

⁵¹ Iron and copper are not belonging to the category of 'precious metals' by our standards, but they do belong to this category in the ancient Near East.

metals is that the reader, who is part of that cognitive setting, immediately recognizes that Job 28 is about metallurgy.

This semasiological approach can be extended with an onomasiological one. Whereas a semasiological study starts with a word and tries to discover the various meanings it may have, an onomasiological analysis starts from a given concept and investigates the words that are used to name that particular concept (Geeraerts 1988: 207-209, Dirven, Verspoor 1998: 25-50). In Figure 1, this approach concentrates on the left diagonal, and is oriented from the top (concept) downwards (linguistic sign). Such an analysis can help us find out where lexical items come from, whether they belong to the same conceptual domain, and whether it is possible to define this domain as a coherent area of conceptualization. Applied to Job 28:1-11, this means that the question should be raised whether the verbs used refer to the conceptual domain of mining or to the conceptual domain of wisdom. Or, to put it differently, would an author who thought in Classical Hebrew use the verbs *zāqaq* and *yāšaḡ*, *ḥāqar* and *pāraṣ*, *bāqā'* and *ḥābaš*, and would he use the nouns *naḥal* and *nahar*, *har* and *ye'ōr*, when he wanted to describe mining activities? Only an exhaustive study of all biblical texts with similar concepts can satisfactorily answer that question. Because of the lack of time and space here, I limit myself to some short remarks.

Technical Classical Hebrew terms for mining are not known to us, because there are no other texts in the Hebrew bible extensively dealing with mining activities. However, some metallurgical concepts occur quite often. The first is the verb *yāša'* (אָשָׂא) which is used four times in the Hebrew bible in combination with silver and gold to sum up the general extraction process and its resulting product. However, in none of these texts the verb the nominalised form *mōšā'* is used. The second is the verb *zāqaq* (צָקַק), occurring seven times in the Hebrew bible, very often directly or indirectly linked to precious metals. We can deduce from these usages that the verb *zāqaq* denotes the aspect of purifying of gold or silver. And thirdly and finally, the verb *yāšaḡ* (אָשַׁג) is used in the Hebrew bible in combination with precious metals to express 'to cast gold', 'to cast silver', 'to cast iron' and 'to cast copper'. In two texts, viz., 1 Kg. 7:46 and 2 Chron. 4:17, this is presented in a more elaborate form.⁵² In

⁵² 1 Kg. 7:45b-46: "All those vessels in the Houses of the Lord that Hiram made for king Solomon were of pure copper. The king had them cast in earthen moulds (literally: in the 'thick of the earth') in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan." 2 Chron. 4:16-17: "And all the vessels made for king Solomon for the House of the Lord by Hiram

these texts, the noun *nehōšet*, ‘copper’, and the verb *yāsaq*, ‘to cast in moulds’, occur side by side and they are related to the place where this copper casting is carried out, namely, in the plain of the Jordan, the place where the copper mines of Timna¹ are located and the melting and casting furnaces have been found. The way these biblical texts refer to the moulds corresponds to what we have seen earlier, and describe that these moulds are dug out of the earth.

Another question is whether the other words used in Job 28:1-11 are as strongly based on metallurgy and mining as the nouns denoting the precious metals. The nouns *hōšek* (חֹשֶׁק), ‘darkness’, *’ōpel* (אֶפֶל), ‘gloom’, and *šalmāwet* (צִלְמוֹת), ‘deep darkness’, (v. 3) are general terms. The object of the human activity is three times described by the term *’eben* (אֶבֶן, vv. 2b, 3b, and 6a) and this is not a technical term for ‘ore’, but merely denotes ‘stone’. The noun *naḥal* (נַחַל), ‘wadi’, is not a technical mining term for shaft or gallery either, and the collocation *pāraš* (פָּרַץ) and *naḥal*, ‘to break open a wadi’ (v. 4a), is not a fixed collocation at all. The act of digging a shaft is compared with the forceful breaking through of a torrent through a steep gorge. To put it in cognitive terms: prototypically, the term *naḥal* has a meaning effect in a reader’s mind: a wadi and not a mining shaft; and the term *pāraš* has as prototypical meaning effect ‘violently breaking open or breaking through’. It is used in other texts as a grave trench or as a tunnel, so the image of it is stretched, but this is less part of prototypical usage than of literary usage. The same is true for the verbs *bāqā’* (בָּקַעַ) and *hābaš* (חָבַשׁ). The first verb is used in v. 10a to describe the digging of shafts in rocks but neither the verb *bāqā’*, ‘to split open’, ‘to break open’, nor the object *ye’ōr* (אֵר), ‘stream’, ‘canal’, are prototypically used for mining activities, but for streams of a river, such as the stream of the Nile or Nile canals. The second verb *hābaš* (חָבַשׁ), ‘to bind’, has never been related before with the object *beki nehārōt* (בְּכִי נְהָרוֹת), ‘the sources of rivers’ (v. 11a).

In conclusion, the two first verses of Job 28 contain prototypical Hebrew words from the conceptual domain of metallurgy: the names and sequence of the precious metals, the verb *zāqaq*, ‘purify’, in relationship with gold, the collocation of *yāsaq*, ‘to cast’, and copper, make it likely, that this conceptual or cognitive domain will be triggered in the contemporary reader’s mind. Once activated, the other verses are profiled

his master were of pure copper. The king had them cast in moulds dug out of the earth, in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zeredah.”

against this setting. However, these other verses do not contain any technical mining terms, but more or less evoke an image of mining activities, without actually using the specific terms, and the combination of nouns and verbs is rather unusual, too.

At the same time, most of the verbs suggesting a description of the mining activities can be interpreted as representatives of wisdom-seeking activities: people 'extract' something from provided material; they do not only pick it up or take it out, but purify it by means of tools, by cutting shafts and galleries. Their search and exploration is similar to those mining activities: the crushing of material into tinier bits corresponds to the extraction of insight by procedures of purification, the casting into a mould corresponds to the combination of newly found elements with other elements. In a way, even our modern approach to cognition and knowledge is represented here. In languages like English, Latin, and Japanese, the concept of knowing is related to the semantic domain of discerning/separating: English *to discern* or *to distinguish*, Latin: *intellego* (*inter-lego* 'choose') and Japanese *wakaru* ('to divide') (cf. Fortescue 2001:21). Job 28:1-11 also relates it to the semantic domain of *grasping*, such as Dutch *begrijpen* ('to grasp'), French *comprendre*, Italian *capire*, German *begreifen*, and English *to grasp* or *to comprehend*. In Job 28, six semantic domains are used to create the imagery of understanding, viz., to separate, to break open, to grasp, to take away, to see and to bring to light.

But then, the refrain of vv. 12-14 and 20-23 shows that wisdom cannot be found in such a way. Wisdom cannot be found with these kinds of concepts. Job 28 states, it is not there when one breaks open, overturns, or devastates. Even seeing and determining the way will not do. In other words, all aspects which function in this kind of conceptualization, with its values of grasping, taking out, breaking through, uncovering, discovering are, metaphorically speaking descriptions of all aspects of knowing, and not of wisdom. Wisdom does not fit in this category of human activities. The very last verse of Job 28 tells us why: "God said to humankind: 'Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding'" (28:28). Wisdom is here described as fitting in the category of not-doing: one should 'refraining from doing'. Understanding is presented not as something which is part of the category of seeing (הָאָר, *rā'ā*), but which fits in the category of fearing or respecting (אָרַע, *yārē*).

3.3 *A prototypical scenario*

A prototypical scenario is the conventional procedure by which a continuum of experiences and events are expressed by a more or less fixed series of words (Yri 1998: 44-55; Dirven, Verspoor 1998: 145-156).⁵³ Above, the prototypical scenario of copper mining was described, and represented as the historically experienced world in which a fixed series of actions was executed. Now, from a cognitive point of view, we can explain that, even though the author of Job 28 may never have been a miner himself or ever visited a copper mine, he nevertheless had a mental image, a conception of the conventional procedure of mining at that time. He, and other people who had experienced directly or heard about it indirectly, construed in their minds the following prototypical scenario: finding ore — making shafts and galleries — making tools, furnaces, mining camps and equipment — letting people down in the shafts — extracting — crushing — grinding — washing — heating — smelting — casting — hammering — making precious things. However, this is not the order as presented here in Job 28: although the categories and concepts of mining activities are used, the order is changed. Job 28 starts with procedures of extraction and, later on, tells about cutting shafts. In the conceptual organization of this text, the imagery of mining is presented not as such, because the prototypical order has been changed and set into the perspective of wisdom. That is why I think that option 2, wisdom as the figure and mining as the ground, should be defended.

Still more important is the fact that the non-prototypical order shows the conceptualiser's perspective. This perspective emerges in the prepositions 'out' and 'from underneath', which show that the cognitive domains are defined relative to the earth: the situation is viewed from the earth's point of view. It starts in v. 1 with the reference to the place and the placer, not to the minerals of silver and gold themselves, and continues in v. 2 with the explicit reference to the earth in iron and copper extraction. Subsequently, in the verbal and verbless clauses of vv. 5-7, the earth is the subject of action and the focus of attention. The shafts and galleries are not described as part of the human mining activities but in reference to the earth: the earth brings forth food, but it is overturned as through fire, tonnes of smelted ore resulting in only a few ounces of precious

⁵³ Yri (1998) gives the first application I know of Langacker's (and Lakoff's) cognitive linguistics in the field of biblical studies.

metal. The earth's mountains are turned upside down, its inside is burnt, its rivers dammed up.

Prototypical scenario

- People
1. find minerals
 2. make shafts and galleries
 3. make mining equipment
 4. let captives down in shafts
 5. let them break stones
 6. crush the rocks
 7. heat and melt it
 8. pour it out and cast it
 9. bring it into form
 10. make products
-

Presentation in Job 28:1-11

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------|------------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------|--------------------------------|------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----------|-----|
| v1. minerals are taken out of places | <i>yāṣā'</i> | (יצא) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v2. minerals are taken out of ore | <i>lāqaḥ</i> | (לקח) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v3. he breaks through shafts | <i>pāraṣ</i> | (פרץ) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v4. miners hang suspended | <i>dālal</i> | (דלל) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table border="0"> <tbody> <tr> <td>v5. out of the earth is food</td> <td><i>yāṣā'</i></td> <td>(יצא)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>v5. the earth is overturned</td> <td><i>hāpak</i></td> <td>(הפך)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>v6. the mineral is the earth's</td> <td><i>-āh</i></td> <td>(ה)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>v6. the mineral is the earth's</td> <td><i>lō</i></td> <td>(ל)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | | v5. out of the earth is food | <i>yāṣā'</i> | (יצא) | v5. the earth is overturned | <i>hāpak</i> | (הפך) | v6. the mineral is the earth's | <i>-āh</i> | (ה) | v6. the mineral is the earth's | <i>lō</i> | (ל) |
| v5. out of the earth is food | <i>yāṣā'</i> | (יצא) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v5. the earth is overturned | <i>hāpak</i> | (הפך) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v6. the mineral is the earth's | <i>-āh</i> | (ה) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v6. the mineral is the earth's | <i>lō</i> | (ל) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v9. he overturns mountains | <i>hāpak</i> | (הפך) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v10. he breaks open shafts | <i>bāqā'</i> | (בקע) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v11. he dams up rivers | <i>ḥābaš</i> | (חבש) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| v12. he brings hidden things to light | <i>yāṣā'</i> | (יצא) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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Figure 3.

Job 28:1-11 starts with the result of the human actions of extracting metals and relates it to the earth. Then it proceeds by telling about its preparatory work of making shafts, not from the human perspective but

from the point of view of the earth. Everything in this text hinges upon the vantage point from which the situation is viewed. The deviation from the prototypically correct order thus shows us that what is usually understood as a condition for human beings is presented here from the perspective of the consequences for the earth. Job 28 starts with referring to human abilities and activities, but then shifts its orientation away from the human perspective and activities to that of the earth: there it lies, with holes, with burnt slags, turned upside down. This is what this so-called wisdom does. This is the result: a devastated earth. Then again the mining procedure is presented but now in reverse order: starting from the consequences for the earth (turnover), via the making of shafts and damming up of the rivers, to the opening activity, 'bringing to light'.

What does this tell us about wisdom? Wisdom is pictured here in the first part of Job 28 as a human activity, as taking out, grasping, the way people conceptualize knowing and understanding. But they never view it the other way around, from the perspective of the material dug up, the stuff that is the object of this mining activity. By conceptualizing these human activities from that perspective, by shifting the point of view, people may realize the devastating consequences of their view, and are forced to re-think their conception of wisdom. Wisdom has nothing to do with this kind of hole-digging, with devastating activities; wisdom is acknowledging the things and the earth from their own perspective, respecting them, and refraining from grasping, from tearing them out of their context and leaving holes and slags behind. What is overturned now? The conceptualization of wisdom is overturned, the slags of the ancient concepts stay behind. So Job 28 is not only about 'the place of wisdom'; it invites us to take up a new position. And the question of who can find wisdom, can be provisionally answered with: those who are able to give up their fixed point of view, their own categories and their limited concepts.

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CAUGHT IN A WEB OF IRONY: JOB AND HIS EMBARRASSED GOD

Dirk Geeraerts

Dealing with discrepancies

In an ironical but at the same time esthetically pleasing way, the position of the reader with regard to the Book of Job is analogous to the position of Job vis à vis God's behavior: for neither of them, it is an easy matter to arrive at a satisfactory interpretation. But if both God and the text are difficult to make sense of, it should come as no surprise that the Book of Job has been subject to postmodern analyses. Postmodern criticism is very much concerned with two related characteristics of texts that feature prominently in the Book of Job: on the one hand, the absence of a definitive interpretation (what is, ultimately, the significance of human suffering?), and on the other, the presence of incongruities and discrepancies (why, for instance, does God answer Job by basically repeating a number of the things that Job himself has already said?) In Job scholarship, these two characteristics seem to lie at the basis of two different strategies of interpretation, one somewhat less extreme than the other. Whereas a more moderate approach shows how the tensions in the text contribute to meaning rather than subverting it, the more radical form of postmodern interpretation takes its starting-point in the absence of a definitive interpretation, and dialectically turns this absence into the very message of the text: the impossibility of arriving at an ultimate meaning *is* the meaning of the text.

A postmodern approach, however, is merely one way of making sense of the alleged inconsistency and inconclusiveness of the text. More traditional is the earnest philological habit of attributing difficulties to textual corruptions and interpolations, and there have of course been many suggestions as to the philologically heterogeneous character of the Book of Job. I am not in a position to judge the philological value of such arguments, but I will assume that it is good hermeneutic practice to apply an interpretative Occam's razor: if we can find a coherent meaning, that option is to be preferred over postulating different textual sources. The

same methodological guideline applies, to be sure, to radical postmodernism: renouncing a coherent textual interpretation in favor of a meta-textual reading is something to be done only as a last recourse, when all other possibilities have been rejected. So have they?

What I propose to do in this paper, then, is to steer clear of both the Scylla of postmodern extremism and the Charybdis of philological facility. Incoherence, a lack of harmony, clashes between different aspects of the text may in fact be interpreted in yet a third way: as symptoms of humor. As a literary genre, humor is the form par excellence to harbor incongruities. So would a humorous reading be an adequate way of dealing with the interpretative difficulties of the Book of Job? To what extent can it be read as an ironic text?

The question is not new, and what I will be able to add to the debate is merely a specific reading of God's speech in chapters 38-41. I will develop my argument in three steps. First, I will review some of the evidence for the presence of irony in the Book of Job. Second, I will chart the ironists' positions with regard to the theophany of chapters 38-41: for those writers who have taken the ironical aspects of the Book of Job seriously, the nature of God's speech is as much a matter of debate as it is for those writers who have simply taken the Book of Job seriously. And third, I will have a closer look at chapters 38-41, arguing that they can indeed be interpreted ironically. The outcome is a reappraisal of the dramatic figure of God: I will argue that the God-character is best interpreted as an embarrassed God.

Methodological preliminaries

The methodology that I will use in the following pages is not specifically linguistic in any technical sense. (It is not even specifically lexical, in spite of my personal specialization in lexical semantics and lexicology.) There is, however, a consistent inspiration from Cognitive Linguistics, which it may be useful to make explicit at this point. (For an introduction into Cognitive Linguistics, see Taylor 1995, Ungerer and Schmid 1993. Foundational works are Langacker 1987, 1991 and Lakoff and Johnson 1981, Lakoff 1987.)

As a first step, let us note that my analysis involves three specific thematic discussions: an investigation into the concept of wisdom as it appears in the Book of Job, a pragmatically oriented analysis of Job's

speech, and an attempt to answer the question whether God's reply to Job can be considered ironical. These topics are situated at different levels of linguistic structure: the analysis of the notion of wisdom looks at a single category, whereas the other two involve utterances as a whole.

As I will try to make clear presently, the three topical questions illustrate a number of views on meaning that are cherished by Cognitive Linguistics. This does not mean, to be sure, that a similar analysis could not be arrived at by other means, i.e. starting from a different framework. I have since long claimed, for instance, that cognitive semantics links up in fundamental respects with a traditional philological approach, and (notwithstanding the recognition that Cognitive Linguistics has developed a battery of analytical notions and techniques that go far beyond anything to be found in the philological tradition), I could very well conceive of the following analysis as coming out of a more traditionally oriented philological approach.

The relevant views on meaning, then, are the following. Each of them relates specifically to one of the three topical discussions.

1 *Meaning involves categorization.* Linguistic meaning is not a straightforward reflection of the world, but it is a way of shaping reality, of making sense of the world. In the case of a concept like 'wisdom', what is to be understood by that term is not a priori given. It is, as we shall see, a category that derives its experiential content from its relationship with other concepts. In the Book of Job, wisdom is not just 'the quality of being wise' or some such lexicographical definition, but it is closely connected with age and experience: I will argue that it is crucial for an understanding of the Book of Job that wisdom comes with age. If we merely think of lexical concepts in the way in which they tend to be economically defined in dictionaries, such aspects of a concept might easily be considered of secondary importance. If one thinks of meanings as categories of experience, however, the entire canvas of associations that the concept entertains becomes part of the meaning.

2 *Meanings may invoke culturally specific background knowledge and assumptions.* As categories making sense of the world, specific categories are situated against a wider context of lived experience, which may be either physiological/biological or cultural. In the pragmatic analysis of Job's speech, I will suggest that Job seems to be flaunting a culturally

specific pragmatic politeness hierarchy that has its roots in a patriarchal context.

3 *Meanings are contextually flexible.* The meanings that are realized in actual speech contexts need not be completely identical with the meanings that are more or less permanently stored in our linguistic memory. The interplay between specific circumstances and the linguistic message may create new or different readings. On the level of individual categories, this flexibility is well-known in the form of prototype effects (Geeraerts 1997). In the Book of Job, the importance of context becomes specifically clear if, at the level of utterances rather than individual categories, we look at the way in which irony comes about. Irony is typically a case in which an expression receives a different interpretation in one context rather than another - even extremely so: one reading is the opposite of the other, and moreover, the contrast between the two readings is part of the effect that the speaker wants to achieve. When, for instance, Job replies to Sofar and the other friends: "wisdom will die with you" (12:2), the utterance receives an ironic interpretation because we know that Job is far from happy with the comfort that his friends purport to give. In the context, Job's reply acquires a sarcastic reading. The impact of context in the constitution of irony is complicated by the fact that the knowledge that triggers the ironic reading is not necessarily shared by all participants (and the reader, to be sure, is one of those participants).

Humor in the book of Job

Before focusing on the possible irony of God's speeches in chapters 38-41, let us first establish that a reading of the Book of Job as a humorous text is not an altogether implausible option. Humor is far from absent in the Old Testament (Good 1965, Knox 1969, Friedman 2000), and a number of authors (Whedbee 1977, Robertson 1973, 1977, Hoffmann 1983-1984) have specifically analyzed the Book of Job with regard to its humorous content. The most radical position in this respect is that of Robertson and Whedbee, who argue that the text as a whole belongs to the genre of comedy. I will discuss the views of Whedbee, Robertson, and Hoffmann more thoroughly in the next section. At this point, I will merely enumerate some of the humorous aspects of the text. Many of the points enumerated here may be found in the works of the authors just

mentioned, but I have tried to bring some order into the matter by grouping the observations in four categories: the conversational style of the book, the characters, the plot as a whole, and specific details of the plot.

First, throughout the conversations and speeches that constitute the main body of the text, there are sarcastic remarks and ironical interchanges among the main characters. For one thing, Job regularly scorns his friends for their failure to provide an adequate answer to his misery. (Quotes are from the Revised Standard Version of 1947.)

12:2 No doubt you are the people, and wisdom will die with you.

13:5 Oh that you would keep silent, and it would be your wisdom!

26:2 How you have helped him who has no power! How you have saved the arm that has no strength!

26:3 How you have counseled him who has no wisdom, and plentifully declared sound knowledge!

26:4 With whose help have you uttered words, and whose spirit has come forth from you?

For an other, God mocks Job's claim to wisdom (the claim, that is, that he could explain something to God that he does not know yet):

38:4 Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding.

38:5 Who determined its measurements--surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it?

and Job's challenging attitude:

40:10 Deck yourself with majesty and dignity; clothe yourself with glory and splendor.

40:11 Pour forth the overflowings of your anger, and look on every one that is proud, and abase him.

40:12 Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked where they stand.

40:13 Hide them all in the dust together; bind their faces in the world below.

40:14 Then will I also acknowledge to you, that your own right hand can give you victory.

Second, the characters have caricatural features. To begin with, Job's friends are a caricature of the wise counselor: they are supposed to comfort Job and provide him with good counsel, but blatantly fail in their task. Next, Elihu is even more ridiculous: there is a comical contrast between the tension and the expectation that is created when Job so to speak calls God's bluff, and the unexpected appearance of Elihu, who is portrayed as a bombastic, long-winded and self-important young upstart. In contrast with the awesome God whose appearance is expected, Elihu is a joker who relieves and at the same time prolongs the tension. Finally, even Job himself, working himself stubbornly from a state of utter desolation into a frenzy of rebellion in which he challenges God to a showdown, displays an obsessive single-mindedness that would suit any of Molière's comical archetypes.

Third, the overall narrative structure of the text corresponds with that of a comedy (not in the sense of an amusing story with funny characters and farcical incidents, but in the sense of a literary work with a happy ending). The overarching structure moves from a blissful, fairytale-like beginning to a situation in which the main character lapses into wretchedness and misery. When the main character has gone through the test (and has changed his ways accordingly), a happy end follows.

And fourth, at a more detailed level of the plot, the progress of events is characterized by comical repetitions and comical reversals. The dominant example of repetition is obviously the conversation between Job and his friends. Time and again, the attempts to comfort and convince Job fail, but time and again, the pattern of futile argument and emotional reply is repeated. A specifically ironical touch is the way in which the pattern of repetitions gradually comes to a halt, with ever shorter interventions of the friends, and finally the complete absence of the expected third speech by Sofar. The ineffectiveness of the interventions, in other words, is reflected by the gradual fading away of the friends' speeches: they literally have no arguments left. An ironic reversal occurs in Job's attitude with regard to God: after God has only once raised his voice, Job's rebellious challenge abruptly changes into subservience. Similarly, there is an ironical reversal in Job's relationship with his friends: while they were supposed to act as intercessors for Job but failed to do so properly, Job, after his restoration, functions as an intercessor for them.

The irony of God's speech I

Both microstructurally and macrostructurally, then, humor and irony seem to play an important role in the construction of the Book of Job. But all interpretations of the book stumble over God's speech - the final chapters of the poetical part of the text that are so hard to interpret that some critics have even suggested that they do not belong to the original text. Writers like Hoffmann, Whedbee, and Robertson, who have devoted specific attention to the humorous and ironic aspects of the book, are likewise divided as to the meaning to be attributed to the intervention of God. In this paragraph, I will try to show that the positions they take correspond to a specific pattern. At the same time, it will appear that there is a hole in the pattern, and the next paragraph will suggest how the hole can be filled.

The position of Robertson and Hoffmann may be contrasted with that of Whedbee: whereas the former argue that God's speech is ironic and evasive, and therefore does not constitute a proper answer to Job's question, the latter underlines the non-ironic, relevant aspects of God's answer. Let us take a closer look at the various positions.

Robertson (1973) interprets God's speech against the larger context of the book, and specifically in the light of chapter 9, where Job predicts what God would do in a face-to-face encounter: God would overawe Job with his intellectual superiority and his overwhelming powers. And when God does indeed appear, he acts precisely as predicted by Job: Job simply does not stand a chance, and he acknowledges as much. God then appears as an inconsiderate tyrant rather than a just and merciful ruler: "So God's rhetoric, because Job has armed us against it, convinces us that he is a charlatan God, one who has the power and skill of a god but is a fake at the truly divine task of governing with justice and love" (1973: 464). Job's repentance, in turn, can only be a non-authentic stance, faking rather than feeling submissiveness. The overall meaning of the Book of Job, then, is that of curing man's fear of fate, his destiny, the unknown by "ridicule of the object feared" (1973: 468): "So we know of him what we know of all tyrants, that while they may torture us and finally kill us, they cannot destroy our personal integrity" (1973: 469).

Whedbee (1977), as we have seen, accepts Robertson's overall premise that the Book of Job belongs to the genre of comedy, but challenges Robertson's reading of God's speech. Robertson, he claims, underplays the significance of God's intervention by merely concentrating on the

ironic interplay between Job's prior speeches and God's speeches. God does in fact go further than just echoing Job's predictions: he redirects them towards a positive vision of the universe. Yes, God is all-powerful (as Job predicted), but whereas Job paints a bleak picture of God's overwhelming strength, God himself brings, as Whedbee states it, a "playful, festive note in the portrayal of creation", stressing the magnificence and the order of the universe rather than the chaos and oppression that Job highlighted. Job's confession, then, is a genuine recognition that he saw creation in the wrong light, and the restoration of Job, rather than being ludicrous in all its implausibility (as Robertson would have it) is a true happy ending.

Robertson (1977), incidentally, has answered Whedbee, but in a very half-hearted way, admitting that "though neither theory is free from defects, both are about as coherent and comprehensive interpretations of the Book of Job as we are likely to get".

Hoffmann's position (1983, 1996), to round off the overview, is an interesting variant of Robertson's. Hoffmann too recognizes God's speech as ironical, but it is not irony of God with regard to Job, but rather irony of the author with regard to himself. It is worthwhile to quote Hoffmann (1983: 19) in full:

The author has ironically presented himself as someone who knows the answer to the questions he has raised. However, in the manner of irony, that which is written (i.e.: here is the well-ordered answer to the questions raised heretofore) implies the exact opposite. What is really being said is: I cannot answer the difficult questions I have presented, and they are still as problematic as before. What we have here is *self-irony*, in that throughout the book the author creates the impression that he knows the answer and will tell us at the end. (...) Hence we arrive at the self-irony of man: All I, as a human being, can do is to delude myself that there is a solution to the problem of divine recompense and mask my delusions one way or another. The ironic truth is that I must accept my fate, come what may.

The inaptness of God's words with regard to Job's question turns the text as a whole into an ironic statement. All along, the text seems to work its laborious way towards an answer, but when the answer finally comes, it is way off the mark.

The pattern that emerges from the positions of these three authors is a simple one: either God's speech is an appropriate albeit indirect response to Job (Whedbee), or it is ironic and evasive (Robertson and Hoffmann). But are these alternatives mutually exclusive? At least in one way they are not: the view that God's speech is a corruption of the original text in the form of a later insertion can be equated with the defeatist view that it is neither appropriate nor ironic, that it is, in other words, uninterpretable. The true hole in the pattern, then, involves the possibility that God's speech is both appropriate and ironic. What would happen if we pursued this line of thought? Can such an interpretation be maintained?

I will explore the possibilities in the next paragraph, but I first have to indicate how the approach that I will propose differs from the positions discussed so far.

On the one hand, I agree with Whedbee that Robertson underestimates the impact of God's speeches: they do not just mimic Job's earlier speeches, but they add something to them. I disagree with Whedbee, however, as to what it is that is being added. Even though there is an element of playfulness in God's speech, the speech as a whole is not really a straightforward hymn to creation. If it convinces Job, it has to be on other grounds than just the festive nature of creation. A closer scrutiny of God's speech is in order, then.

On the other hand, I entirely agree with Hoffmann that we have to take into account different levels of irony in the text. Whereas Robertson only envisages the irony of God with regard to Job, we have to allow for forms of irony that are perceived only by the author and the audience, and not by the characters. However, I think we can be more precise about the conspiracy between the author and the audience than Hoffmann is, by taking a closer look at the narrative framework of the text. If the audience knows more than the characters, it is through the narrative setting introduced in the prologue. So how does God's speech relate to the prologue?

The appropriateness of God's speech I

There are two points of a pragmatic nature that need to be elucidated first. To begin with, God's speech is definitely an indirect speech act, and indirect speech acts can constitute extremely appropriate answers. If you ask me: "Will you attend Ron Langacker's lecture?", and I reply: "Have men walked on the moon?", then my rhetorical question is not a direct

answer, but it does constitute an appropriate response of the “obviously”-type.

Further, appropriate responses to speech acts may take the form of questioning the felicity conditions of those speech acts. Felicity conditions are criteria that have to be fulfilled if a speech act is to be properly made. They may involve the sincerity of the speaker, the authority invested in the speaker, the ability of the speaker to live up to the consequences of his commitments, and so on. In all cases, satisfaction of the felicity conditions is a necessary prerequisite for a certain speech act to be pragmatically valid. This implies that certain acts may be appropriately countered by pointing out that the felicity conditions of the act do not hold. Imagine a 15-year old at the box office of a theater showing only X-rated movies, asking whether the film is shown with or without a break. If he gets the answer: “Sorry, but you are under age”, then it is clearly not a direct answer to his question, but it is an appropriate answer, because it makes clear that he was not in a position to ask the initial question to begin with. The presuppositions that are necessary for the question to be a relevant one, are not met, and pointing that out is a conversationally adequate answer.

My suggestion now is that God’s speeches may be read as *indirect speech acts questioning the felicity conditions* of Job’s question. I will argue for this position in two steps. First, I will analyze the concept of wisdom in the Book of Job, because Job’s speech act is fundamentally framed as an investigation into knowledge and truth. If Job is asking for insight but is asking for it in the wrong way, then we will first have to be clear about the conception of knowledge and insight that permeates the Book of Job (and that is insufficiently heeded by Job). Second, I will have to deal with the twopartite structure of God’s speech, because each of those parts addresses a different aspect of Job’s pragmatically inappropriate behavior.

The concept of wisdom (and insight, as both terms are often mentioned together: see 11:6; 15:8-9; 26:3; 28:12; 32:7-8; 34:34-35; 38:36; 39:17) is basically presented with three features (apart from the fact, of course, that wisdom is difficult to attain).

First, wisdom is a condition for appropriate speech. See e.g. 11:47; 20:3; 26:3-4; 32:7-8; 34:35; 36:4 and other passages, of which God’s comment in 38:2-4 is perhaps the most poignant one. In itself, this association between wisdom and the pragmatic validity of a given discourse is not surprising. In the dramatic setting of Job’s attempt to justify himself,

speaking the truth, expressing wisdom, formulating the right insight is probably the motor concept par excellence of the whole text. We will see presently, however, that this unsurprising link between possessing wisdom and speaking appropriately is the basis for a specific pragmatic logic.

Second, wisdom correlates with age. Take the second speech by Elifaz, lines 15:7-10. Elifaz questions Job's insight by pointing out that Job is not of infinite age.

- 7 Are you the first man that was born? Or were you brought forth before the hills?
- 8 Have you listened in the council of God? And do you limit wisdom to yourself?
- 9 What do you know that we do not know? What do you understand that is not clear to us?
- 10 Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us, older than your father.

Superior knowledge, in other words, presupposes superior age. Similar lines are to be found in Sofar's speech in 20:4, in Elihu's speech in 32:7-9, perhaps also in Job's words in 28:13, and most certainly in God's remark in 38:4. Job cannot have infinite wisdom because he does not have infinite age. If we accept that the experience needed for ultimate wisdom exceeds the bounds of human life, then, of course, wisdom cannot be found in the land of the living. The patriarchal association of wisdom with experience and age is, in other words, extrapolated towards God. In the ordinary context of the patriarchal society, the elders know best. God however is a superhuman hyper-patriarch who has to know even better, if only because of his superior age.

Third, it follows from the combination of the first and the second feature that age is a prerequisite for appropriate speech, or at least, that there is likely to exist a pragmatic hierarchy of speaking rights based on age and assumed wisdom: the young do not speak before the old. As a form of a politeness hierarchy, such a hierarchical restriction on the structure of conversation would be a conventional part of a patriarchal society, but in the context of the Book of Job, it acquires a specific depth through the way in which the text focuses on the concept of wisdom.

This is particularly apparent in the speech of Elihu. On the one hand, Elihu presupposes the patriarchal model, expressing his disappointment

in the older people who have spoken before him, but who have not exhibited the wisdom that might be expected of them: see 32:7-9. On the other hand, Elihu breaks the hierarchy. According to the patriarchal politeness hierarchy, Elihu speaks before his time. He is a young person challenging the elders, and moreover challenging them on their own domain: that of wisdom. That is why Elihu can be depicted as a fool, making a lot of wind, inflating himself, making himself more important, and continually re-affirming his own importance.

Elihu, in short, challenges the patriarchs without being in a position to do so. But ironically, this is precisely what Job does with regard to God. The position of Elihu with regard to Job and his patriarch friends is structurally analogous to the position of Job with regard to the divine super-patriarch. The epistemological hierarchy of wisdom and age, coupled with the pragmatic hierarchy of politeness and conversational turn-taking, leads to a linear ordering where Elihu is lower on the ladder than Job and where Job is lower on the ladder than God.

But then, Job calling God to account is not observing the linear ordering just as much as Elihu is in reprimanding the elders. In challenging God, Job is making a non-felicitous speech act, because he is not observing the hierarchy of politeness and conversational rights, and in claiming that he can teach God something about his innocence, he is ignoring the hierarchy of wisdom that is itself (as we have seen) intimately connected with the pragmatic hierarchy.

God, to be sure, makes all this apparent, putting his mighty finger on Job's breach of felicity conditions. God makes clear (in a roundabout way, by pointing out rather than by stating explicitly) that Job is going beyond the pale. Note that we have just identified two relevant conditions that Job is not observing: one having to do with a hierarchy of politeness and conversational rights, and the other having to do with a hierarchy of wisdom and knowledge. That is why we have two speeches of God: in each of the speeches, God addresses one of Job's pragmatic trespasses. The first speech addresses the hierarchy of wisdom (i.e. Job's flaunting of the presupposition that superior wisdom correlates with superior age, and that ultimate wisdom relies on infinite age). The second speech addresses the hierarchy of power (i.e. Job's flaunting of principles of conversational politeness).

The appropriateness of God's speech II

The binary nature of God's speech is one of those aspects of the text that have troubled the interpreters. It has been claimed that the double speech of God is a flaw in the text, an interpolation perhaps, and in any case a superfluous repetition. Why are there two speeches of God? Why is there a second speech if Job has already submitted after the first one? Is God just sadistically rubbing it in, delivering a final blow to an already subdued enemy? I would argue that there are subtle differences between the two speeches that indicate that they have a different focus. There are three basic observations that I would like to advance in support of this idea.

First, God's opening lines, setting the topic of the speeches, unmistakably mark a difference. The opening of the first speech takes Job at issue for wanting to teach God something, as if God were saying: "So you want to instruct me? Well okay, be a man, and let's see if you can teach me anything". The second speech puts it no less explicitly in terms of power relations: "You want to challenge me? Well okay, let's see how far you can get." Whereas 38:2 invokes knowledge (and "words without knowledge") as the theme of the speech, 40:8 invokes condemnation and justification, i.e. the notion of authority. Needless to say, the two aspects that we have identified above involve precisely the way in which Job counteracts or at least ignores the prevailing models of knowledge and authority.

Second, Job's reaction is fitting with regard to the topic of the speeches. After the first speech, he basically admits that he has no knowledge to speak of, and then he shuts up - which is an entirely appropriate reaction in a cognitive context, i.e. in a context focusing on knowledge and wisdom. After the second speech, by contrast, Job does something rather than say something: he submits and repents. The reaction is not a cognitive one, but a symbolic one; it involves making symbolical amends. Whereas Job's first reaction is a cognitive recognition of ignorance, his second reaction is a symbolical recognition of impudence, followed by a ritual act of making amends.

And third, the text of the speeches, the argument that each of them contains, is clearly different. In the second speech, we find images of power - the two monsters - and of power over power. God conjures up the terrible image of Leviathan and Behemoth, and further shows (in a positively hilarious way) that he controls the monsters: "Look, I can draw

a straw through the crocodile's nose and lift it up. Can you?" In the first speech, on the other hand, we get images of the birth of the cosmos and the principles that organize it. Given the model of wisdom that we have been able to identify, this is entirely appropriate: God displays his superior knowledge which is grounded in his superior age, i.e. the fact that he (and not Job; compare 15:7) witnessed and engineered the creation of the world. Once again, God is overwhelming Job: "Look, I know all of all this. Do you? And if you do not, how can you question me?"

In short, then, God seems to be saying something like this: "Well, Job, you are asking me for a chance to defend yourself, but actually, you are not in a position to ask. You challenge me to explain what is going on, but come to think of it, you do not have enough wisdom to understand what is going on, and moreover, you are not powerful enough to challenge me."

There is, however, another step to take. What is the function of the second part of the first speech? Chapter 39 does not contain cosmic images but rather describes a number of animals (though not powerful monsters as in chapters 40 and 41). One way of reading 39 is just as an addition to 38, as further proof of God's powers of creation (and hence his unsurpassed knowledge). I would argue, however, that God is adding a nuance to the first part of his first speech. To be sure, we cannot really say that God is noticeably subtle in his speeches. He uses extremely powerful images of cosmic and animal forces, and Job is duly overpowered; predominantly, God is just putting Job down. But in 39, a touch of subtlety does creep in.

Overall, the chapter presents multiple images of carefree and proud animals. What is the function of this? I would suggest that the key lies right in the center of the chapter, where God describes the ostrich.

- 13 The wings of the ostrich wave proudly; but are they the pinions and plumage of love?
- 14 For she leaves her eggs to the earth, and lets them be warmed on the ground,
- 15 forgetting that a foot may crush them, and that the wild beast may trample them.
- 16 She deals cruelly with her young, as if they were not hers; though her labor be in vain, yet she has no fear;
- 17 because God has made her forget wisdom, and given her no share in understanding.

- 18 When she rouses herself to flee, she laughs at the horse and his rider.

The passage (and particularly 39:17, which seems to mirror 28:20) adds a crucial nuance to the conclusion that Job arrives at in 28:28. The ostrich is presented as carefree (39:13) but at the same time as careless: it does not mind leaving its children in the desert (39:14-15) nor treating them harshly (39:16). Moreover (39:17), it does not mind if its efforts are useless, and it thinks highly of its own strength, lightly attacking humans, i.e. beings that are higher on the scale of creation (39:18).

The ostrich, then, is the ironical counter-image of Job himself: Job does worry, conspicuously so, about his children coming to harm and about the fruit of his life's work being destroyed. And even if Job stands up against a higher, divine power, he does not do so laughingly. This ironical context gives specific depth to line 39:17, which reads an explanation of the ostrich's behavior against the background of the hierarchy of knowledge: the ostrich is carefree precisely because it has no insight. This could be called the 'tree of knowledge' argument: because man has eaten from the tree of knowledge, he is no longer happy and carefree like the animals. By implication, the very fact that Job does worry establishes that he is not entirely devoid of insight.

God, in other words, refers to the hierarchy of wisdom to point out to Job that he got his presuppositions wrong (chapter 38), but at the same time, he subtly suggests (chapter 39) that the hierarchy of wisdom has to be extended in another sense as well: starting from Job, the Great Chain of Being has to be extended upwards from man to God, but it also has to be extended in a downward direction from man to animal. So, we have to modify our summary of God's first speech slightly: "Job, you are challenging me on the point of wisdom. Well, you're in no position to do so, because my knowledge is infinite and yours is limited. But if it can be of any comfort to you, remember that your limited knowledge is precisely what distinguishes you from the animals." Job is asking questions that he cannot *answer*, but the very fact that he can *ask* them demonstrates that he is closer to God than he may be inclined to think.

The irony of God's speech II

In an indirect, roundabout speech, replete with images and innuendo's, God suggests that the felicity conditions for Job's challenging attitude are not met, with regard to the question of wisdom just as well as with regard to the question of power and authority. This is a relevant answer, given the hierarchical model of knowledge and authority that permeates the text. And because Job clearly agrees, both in thought and in behavior, God's reply can only be considered an effective one.

But even if God's discourse is an appropriate and effective one, yielding an answer that Job can genuinely (though perhaps uncomfortably) live with, God is still being evasive and dismissive. He is sending Job off none the wiser, or at least, just a tiny bit wiser. Shouldn't we expect a different answer from God? It is important to make a distinction at this point between the expectations we may have as a reader and the expectations we may have as a believer. As believers, identifying with Job, we may either find God's answer unsatisfactory, or we may accept the idea that God's logic escapes us. As readers, however, we need not even ask the question, because we know what the answer is. This is a recognition that is remarkably absent from most discussions. If Job's question is: "Why do you torment me so while I am innocent?", we as readers *know* the answer, and we have known it from the very start of the book: God is tormenting Job merely because God has been persuaded by the satan to test Job. God has been bragging about Job, and being challenged by the satan to prove himself right, God lets the satan have his way with Job.

As readers, then, we know very well that God's answer to Job, though pragmatically relevant and conversationally effective, is not the true answer. So why doesn't God give the true answer? At least one plausible solution, it would seem to me, is to recognize that God may well be *embarrassed*. Even if the satan in the story were not the devil of later Judaism and Christianity but rather a member of God's courtly council (see Pagels 1995), God is not exactly well-behaved by common human standards. He has been playing a bad joke on Job, and he is not really in a position to confess to it. Job's insistence creates a painful moment for God: he could not really admit that he has been agonizing Job because he is his most faithful servant, could he?

The suggestion of an embarrassed God, outlandish though it may seem, does not only follow from the narrative context. There are two

other features of the very final chapter of the book that fit in well with such an interpretation.

First, how can God declare that Job has spoken right of him when Job himself admitted that he had no understanding and that he had been talking nonsense? God's declaration in 42:7 can hardly apply to Job's earlier statements, which were dismissed in 38:2 as lacking understanding. At the same time, it can hardly apply to Job's newly acquired submissive attitude (and silence), because it is not different enough from the deferential attitudes advocated earlier by Job's friends, who are now being punished. Logically speaking, then, God's statement that Job has spoken right of him would seem to be paradoxical on any account. However, if we take it as a gesture of atonement, as a comforting signal that everything is alright now, as a way of saying that in spite of everything, Job is still God's best friend, then of course it matches the assumption that God somehow feels indebted to Job.

Second, the restoration of Job carries a hint of overcompensation. The reversal is so abrupt and the reparation so exaggerated that it can only be a sign of God's bad conscience. God is trying to make amends, and his feeling of unease induces him to do so lavishly.

On the whole, then, coming back to our earlier discussion of the views of Whedbee, Robertson, and Hoffmann, we can conclude that the opposition between Whedbee on the one hand and Robertson and Hoffmann on the other is not an exclusive one. God's speech is appropriate, but at the same time, his behavior appears to be profoundly ironic, in a sense that may be perceived by the audience and God himself, but hardly by Job. There is an ironic discrepancy between God's show of power with regard to Job, and his actual state of embarrassment. God's authority, his wisdom, and his strength overpower Job, but the reader can recognize them as a disguise of God's vulnerability. Likewise, there is an ironic discrepancy between the message of God's indirect speech act ("you're in no position to ask") and the message that we assume God is trying to avoid ("I am in no position to answer").

The theology of God's embarrassment

Within the dramatic structure of the text, then, God's behavior exhibits an ironical embarrassment. But what does this mean for our interpretation of the text as a whole, if we think of it as a religious text? How should we

interpret God's embarrassment? I would like to suggest that we have two basic alternatives.

If we contrast the common expectation of an omnipotent God with the image drawn in the Book of Job - the image, that is, of an all too human, fumbling, embarrassed God - then the text has an overall ironic meaning. We could even conjecture that we are dealing here with a form of what we would now identify as Jewish humor, with the author mocking his own initial, pre-existing image of God, and his own subordination to a God that he does not entirely fathom. But as we know next to nothing about the way in which the original audience may have understood the text (how old, in fact, is Jewish humor?), it may be cautious to contrast the radically ironic interpretation with a more charitable one: what if the Book of Job is trying to make a specifically subtle point about the relationship between God and man?

At this point, I am again drawn to the ostrich passage as a key for an alternative interpretation. On the ladder of Creation, human intelligence has a specific place. It alone can recognize the wonders of creation and the power of God, but it can only do so at a tremendous price - the loss of innocence and carefreeness. God's embarrassment at the enormity of the price, in return, would seem to ask for much more drastic measures than the mere restoration of Job. Perhaps the Job episode, this practical joke that almost got out of hand, convinced God that he needed to set things straight with mankind on a much grander scale. And so Job would be vindicated, as a prefiguration...

It should be clear that the context that could disambiguate between these alternatives can hardly be found within the text itself. I have so far tried to formulate an interpretation that is as consistent as possible with what we know about the internal features of the text and the external context (such as the patriarchal social structure) in which it originated. But there are natural limits to this approach, and the choice between the alternative interpretations suggested here far exceeds the contextualized methodology that I have tried to follow. But that, I would say, is merely one more irony of this profoundly ironical text.

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‘THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS WISDOM’ (JOB 28:28)
A SEMANTIC AND CONTEXTUAL STUDY

David J.A. Clines

וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָדָם הֵן יִרְאַת אֲדֹנָי הִיא חֲכָמָה וְסוּר מִרָע בִּינָה
And he said to humans,
‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
and to turn away from evil is understanding’.

The aim of this paper is to examine first the semantics of the phrase ‘the fear of God’ / ‘the fear of the Lord’, and secondly to consider the meaning of the sentence ‘the fear of the Lord is wisdom’ (Job 28:28) within its contexts (variously defined) in the Book of Job.

1. *The word group to which יִרְאָה belongs*

The form יִרְאָה ‘fear’ is in Job 28:28, and usually, a noun connected with the verb יָרָא ‘fear’ (*qal*, *niph’al*, *pi’el*); occasionally however the form is an infinitive construct of the verb.¹ Other forms connected with the verb are: יָרָא ‘fearing’, a verbal adjective, נוֹרָר ‘feared’, a verbal adjective from the *niph’al*, and the noun מוֹרָא ‘fear’.

2. *Syntactic relationships of the word group of יִרְאָה*

The syntactic relationships in which the word group are used are these:²

The verb יָרָא in the *qal* may be used absolutely, or with a following infinitive construct, or with a direct or indirect object (an indirect object

¹ Gesenius, Kautsch and Cowley 1910: § 45d [henceforth GKC]; Joüon and Muraoka 1991: § 49d [henceforth Joüon–Muraoka].

² Details may be seen in Clines 1998: IV, 276-82, and (for מוֹרָא), 1998: V, 187-88 [henceforth DCH].

is usually introduced with מִן or מִפְנֵי.³ In the *niph'al*, the finite verb is rare, but the participle ('feared', terrible) is common. In the *pi'el*, the verb can be used absolutely or with a direct object. In Classical Hebrew, the verb (including the verbal adjectives יָרָא and נוֹרָא) occurs 378 times in the Hebrew Bible, 13 times in Ben Sira, and 62 times in the Dead Sea Scrolls, a total of 453 occurrences.

The noun יִרְאָה 'fear' is occasionally the subject or object of a finite verb, but more often is the subject in a nominal clause (as in Job 28:28). It commonly occurs as the *nomen regens* in a construct phrase (as in Job 28:28), rarely as the *nomen rectum*. In Classical Hebrew, the noun occurs 44 times in the Hebrew Bible (22 times in the phrase יִרְאָה יְהוָה, 3 times in the phrase יִרְאָה אֱלֹהִים), 8 times in Ben Sira, and 5 times in the Dead Sea Scrolls, a total of 57 occurrences.

The verbal adjective יָרָא 'fearing' is always used in the construct (e.g. יִרְאֵי אֱלֹהִים 'fearers of God', Ps. 66:16) or with a suffix (e.g. יִרְאֵיךָ 'those who fear you', Ps. 119:74).

The *niph'al* verbal adjective נוֹרָא 'feared' is used both attributively and predicatively. In some cases it is effectively a noun, 'awesome one' or 'terrible thing'.

The noun מוֹרָא 'fear' is rarely a subject, but attested as an object and as both subject and predicate in nominal clauses. It is rarely used in the construct. In Classical Hebrew, the noun occurs 12 times in the Hebrew Bible, once in Ben Sira, and 3 times in the Dead Sea Scrolls, a total of 16 occurrences.

3. Semantics of יִרְאָה and its word group

The word group to which יִרְאָה belongs is normally used for the emotion of fear, an experience common in the face of threats or of the unknown. Overwhelmingly, it is fear as experienced by humans; exceptionally, in Gen 9:2 it is the animals' fear of humans (מוֹרָאֵכֶם 'your fear' is an objective genitive, i.e. 'the fear of you'), and in Joel 2:21-22 the land (אֶרֶץ) and the beasts of the field (בְּהֵמוֹת שָׂדֵי) are urged not to fear.⁴

³ On the absence of an idiom פָּן יִרָא 'fear lest', see Joüon 1921: 336-42 (340-42).

⁴ Günther Wanke (1976: 200) knows only of the reference in Gen 9:2.

3.1 יִרְאָה and its word group in non-religious contexts

Following are some of the contexts or realms in which the word group of יִרְאָה is typically used (excluding for the moment examples where God is the object of the fear):

1. *fear of animals*

Amos 3:8 The lion has roared; who will not fear?

Job 5:22 you shall not fear the beasts of the earth.

2. *fear of things*

Jer. 42:16 then the sword which you fear shall overtake you.

Prov. 31:21 She is not afraid of snow for her household.

Eccl. 12:5 they are afraid also of what is high.⁵

3. *fear of persons* (commonly in the context of battle)

Gen. 26:7 he feared to say, "My wife", thinking, "lest the men of the place should kill me for the sake of Rebekah."

Gen. 32:11 Deliver me ... from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he come and slay us all.

1 Kings 1:50 And Adonijah feared Solomon; and he arose, and went, and caught hold of the horns of the altar.

Jer. 26:21 The king sought to put him to death; but when Uriah heard of it, he was afraid and fled and escaped to Egypt.

Dan. 1:10 and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear lest my lord the king, who appointed your food and your drink, should see that you were in poorer condition than the youths who are of your own age. So you would endanger my head with the king."

Exod. 14:10 The people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were in great fear.

1 Sam. 7:7 Now when the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against

⁵ Wanke (1976: 200) speaks of a 'weakening' of the content of יִרְאָה 'in later texts', as in Eccl 12:5, 'the old man's fear of a hill that shows up his weakness', Prov 31:21, 'the anxiety of a housewife in face of inclement weather', Job 32:6 and Lev 19:3, 'the respect of youth for age or of children for parents'. Without subscribing to the assumed developmental hypothesis for the semantics of יִרְאָה, we may allow that not all fear is fear of death, and, at the same time, be prepared to consider that in Eccl 12:5 and Prov 21:21 it might be precisely that.

Israel. And when the people of Israel heard of it they were afraid of the Philistines.

It is notable that, whatever the object of fear, whether animals, things, or persons, what the fear consists of is very often (perhaps we should say, normally) fear of *death*. In all the above cases (except perhaps Prov. 31:21) it is fear of death, though death is by no means always explicit (of the examples noted above, it is mentioned only in Gen. 26:7; 32:11; Jer. 26:21; Dan. 1:10).⁶ It is quite rare that people are said to fear some lesser evil, though some examples may be noted:

Gen. 31:31 Jacob answered Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force."

Gen. 43:18 And the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house, and they said, "It is because of the money, which was replaced in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us, to make slaves of us and seize our asses."

1 Sam.3:15 Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli.

Is. 51:7 Hearken to me, you who know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear not the reproach of men, and be not dismayed at their revilings.

The fears in these passages are: Jacob's that he will lose his wives, the brothers of Joseph that they will be taken into slavery, Samuel's that he might incur Eli's wrath, Israel that they will be reproached. In general, however, when people fear, they fear death, and if death is not explicitly mentioned, it may be presumed, in the absence of other indicators. Thus an apparently casual use of the verb, as in

Ruth 3:11 And now, my daughter, do not fear, I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of worth.

⁶ The analysis by H.-P. Stähli (1974: 570-71) of the 'primary realms' in which *אָרֶץ* is used may be faulted for not recognizing this fact: he identifies such realms as (1) fear of animals and things, (2) fear of death, (3) anxiety, (4) fear of enemies in combat, and (5) anxiety in the face of the unknown. The fear of death, however, cannot be an element in such a list, since it is common to all of the other items.

may suggest that the situation Ruth finds herself in might be more dangerous than appears. And an occurrence when no mention is made of death, such as in

1 Sam. 31:4 Then Saul said to his armour-bearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and make sport of me." But his armour-bearer would not; for he feared greatly.

2 Sam. 1:14 David said to him, "How is it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?"

may nevertheless conjure up in the reader's mind that very possibility.⁷

Comments on some particular passages

Prov. 14:16 חָכָם יָרָא וְכָסִיל מִחֲעֶבֶר וּבוֹטֵחַ רְשָׁעִי RSV 'A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool throws off restraint and is careless'. Stähli thinks that we have here a 'thoroughly banal' sense of יָרָא, and that it is best rendered 'is careful'.⁸ On the contrary, the essence of this paradoxical proverb seems to be that the life of the wise is one of fear (יָרָא), while the life of the fool is one of trust (בֹּטַח).

Cf. too Prov. 28:14 בֵּרֶכֶּה לֵבּוֹ יִפּוֹל בְּרָעָה אִשְׁרֵי אָדָם מִפֶּחַח תָּמִיד וּמִקָּשָׁה לֵבּוֹ יִפּוֹל 'Blessed is the man who always fears; but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity'; we should probably resist the temptation to add 'Yahweh' as the object of the verb (as e.g. RSV).

Job 32:6 וְנִחַלְתִּי וְאֵיכָא מַחֲיוֹת דְּעֵי אֶחָכֶם RSV 'I was timid and afraid to declare my opinion to you'. Stähli finds here an 'ethical transformation', יָרָא expressing 'the honor of youth before age'; he proposes the translation 'shy away', taking the parallel וְנִחַל as 'glide away, creep' (so KB, p. 254a; BDB, p. 267b). But it is now more commonly accepted that וְנִחַל here is a different verb, meaning 'be anxious, fear' (as in Aramaic); so HALAT, I, p. 257a (= HALOT, I, p. 267b); DCH, III, p. 101a. There remains no reason whatsoever for denying to יָרָא its usual sense of 'fear'.

⁷ Wanke (1976: 200) remarks that it is not always clear whether fear in war is fear of death or of defeat or of slavery, for example but one might suppose that it would be an unusual soldier who was afraid of being defeated but not of being killed.

⁸ Stähli (1974: 571); he cites in support Joachim Becker 1965: 235f.; Siegfried Plath 1963: 64; and Helmer Ringgren 1962: 62.

3.2 ירא' and its word group in religious contexts

Having considered usages of the ירא' group in non-religious contexts, we may now move to those where the object of the fear is God. These constitute the majority of the occurrences. Stähli reckons that some four-fifths of occurrences of the ירא' group (i.e. c. 350 occurrences) are what he terms 'theological'.⁹ We should however exclude from that number the c. 60 passages where God encourages people to 'fear not'; in such cases the fears they are experiencing are no different from the fears we have examined above, and the fact that it is God who says 'fear not' does not alter the semantic value of the verb, or, for that matter, make the fear 'theological'. If there are some 434 occurrences of the ירא' group in the Hebrew Bible (see the statistics above in Section 2), we should say rather that some two-thirds of those are in reference to the 'fear of God'.

In order to highlight the problematic that will concern us here, I will first consider the conclusions of some standard lexica and encyclopaedias and outline my own view before examining the textual evidence in detail.

In the previous section (3.1) it was evident that the ירא' group straightforwardly indicated the normal and common human emotion of fear. It is somewhat surprising therefore to discover on reading the lexica and textbooks a well-nigh universal agreement that, broadly speaking, when God is the object of ירא' or when the fear of God is mentioned, there is no reference to any emotion experienced by the person but rather to (a) their attitude of respect or reverence towards the deity and/or (b) their ethical behaviour. Sometimes it is allowed that respect or reverence for God carries an overtone of dread of the numinous, but that is not thought to be the principal sense.¹⁰ I think it worthwhile to cite some representative statements of this view so that it is unmistakable.¹¹

⁹ Stähli 1974: 571.

¹⁰ One interesting exception to the prevailing view is that of Samuel Terrien (1962: 258): "It would be a grave error ... to soften the meaning of the expression ['fear of the Lord'] and to ignore its central element of *mysterium tremendum* ... [T]he fear of the Lord is not merely to be equated with reverence, piety, or religion because it is impossible today to reevaluate and again charge these terms with their ancient—but now largely lost—connotation of awesomeness." It may be noted here that several writers seem to misunderstand Rudolf Otto's (1967: 269) distinction between *tremendum* and *fascinans*: "[R]eligious fear is ... an oscillation between repulsion and attraction, between *mysterium tremendum* and *fascinans*". Otto is clear that fear is an emotion, and that attraction or fascination is another.

¹¹ In addition to those mentioned below, see Bernard J. Bamberger (1929: 39-53) who distinguishes 'fear' from 'worship' as the meanings of ירא', while not accepting 'the more refined sentiments' of 'awe' or 'reverence' as permissible translations (Barré 1981: 41-43,

Günter Wanke, in *TDNT*,¹² recognizes some passages in which fear of God signifies 'terror', but gives much more prominence to the sense of 'reverence and submissive recognition', which 'can become independent of the physical aspect' (I think he means 'emotional', which is not properly speaking physical at all). In the Elohistic literature, fearing God is orienting one's conduct to the will of God (e.g. Gen. 22:12). In Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic literature, fearing God 'amounts to the observance of moral and cultic demands'. In the Wisdom literature, the fear of God 'has left the emotional realm and become an object of reflection'; it is often equated with the knowledge that is the purpose of the wisdom teaching (e.g. Prov. 1:29). The fear of God is the religious aspect of that wisdom. In the Psalms, the characteristic use of the **יָרָא** word group is of the 'fearers of Yahweh' (**יְרֵאָה** **יְהוָה**) who are 'almost exclusively characterized by religious traits', their moral features being less prominent (e.g. Ps. 22:24; 147:11). Finally, 'as legal piety invades the wisdom of Israel', the fear of God becomes obedience to the Law (e.g. Ps. 1:2; 119:63).¹³

H.-P. Stähli, in *TDOT*,¹⁴ allows that "in various passages the original numinous character of the 'fear (of God)' is still clear", but follows Becker in positing a semantic development from such fear of the numinous to a moral sense and beyond that to a 'cultic' concept of fear as equating with honour.¹⁵ "A basic note of numinous fear is always present", however, he concedes, even though it is "markedly attenuated". In the Deuteronomistic literature, the fear of Yahweh should be 'understood solely as "the worship of Yahweh with particular attention to the concept of faithfulness to him as the covenant God"'.¹⁶ In the Psalms, the term 'fearers of Yahweh' refers to 'the community of those who worship Yahweh in the cult'. In the wisdom literature, the fear of God is 'a fixed term for just, ethical behaviour'.¹⁷

also emphasizes the cultic dimension of the fear of God, as also of Akk. *palahu*); Brongers (1948) who relates the two senses of **יָרָא** to the two elements of the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*; Blocher 1977: 6-10; Zatelli 1988; Cox 1982. See also Gruber (1990) who maintains that the dual meaning of 'fear' and 'reverence' is attested for the Akk. *palahu* as well as for Hebrew **יָרָא**. This would require further examination than I am able to give here.

¹² Wanke (1976).

¹³ Wanke 1976: 201-203.

¹⁴ Stähli (1974: 568-578) '**יָרָא** *yr*' 'to fear'.

¹⁵ Becker 1965: 38f.

¹⁶ Citing Becker 1965: 85.

¹⁷ Citing Becker 1965: 187; cf. also Plath 1963: 78.

The lexicon of Brown, Driver and Briggs offers the following analysis of the *qal* of the verb אָרַךְ: 1. fear, be afraid; 2. stand in awe of, with God or the king as object; 3. fear, reverence, honour, e.g. parents, Moses and Joshua, oath, commandment, sanctuary, other gods, God.¹⁸

My own view is suspicious of the alleged ‘semantic development’ from fear as an emotion to fear as ‘religion’ or ‘moral behaviour’ and indeed of the common assertion that the ‘fear of God’ can mean something other than the emotion of fear. I believe that the whole edifice of a moral, ethical and cultic meaning for the phrase ‘fear of God’ is built on a confusion of sense and reference, which is to say, of denotation and connotation. My conclusion is that the אָרַךְ word group always signifies the emotion of fear (which is its sense or denotation), but that sometimes that emotion leads to actions (or avoidance of actions) of an ethical or cultic kind (which are then its reference or connotation). In brief, when people do not lie, for example, because of the ‘fear of God’, it does not mean that they do not lie because they behave ethically but because they are afraid of God and of the consequences he may exact of them for lying.¹⁹

i. *Indubitable examples of the אָרַךְ word group for being afraid of God*

All writers acknowledge that אָרַךְ can mean ‘be afraid’ of God. Some examples are these:

Gen. 28:17 And he was afraid (אָרַךְ), and said, “How awesome (אֲדָמָה) is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

Isa. 25:3 Therefore strong peoples will glorify thee; cities of ruthless nations will fear thee.

¹⁸ The lexicon of Koehler and Baumgartner (HALAT, II, p. 413b, HALOT, II, p. 433a), on the other hand, does not sharply separate the emotion of fear from fear of God. Its analysis of the *qal* of אָרַךְ is: 1. fear; 2. fear God; 3. be afraid. It is striking that it does not invoke the terms ‘reverence, honour’ and the like (HALOT, II, p. 433a).

¹⁹ I do not intend to extrapolate from these linguistic observations to a more general theory of the relation of fear to religion, but I simply note the ancient view that fear is the *origin* of religion (personally, I would rather believe that *gratitude* is the origin of religion). Such a view was advanced by Democritus of Abdera (c. 400 BCE), and followed by Epicurus (d. 270 BCE). A notable exponent was Lucretius (d. 55 BCE) in his *De rerum natura* 5.1161-1240. The Silver Age poet Statius (c. 50-100 CE) formulated it thus: *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor* ‘Fear first on earth created gods’ (*Thebais* 3.661). I owe these references to Pfeiffer (1955: 41-48).

Isa. 41:5 The coastlands have seen and are afraid (יָרָא), the ends of the earth tremble (חָרַד).

Jer. 10:7 Who would not fear thee, O King of the nations? For this is thy due.²⁰

ii. *Evidence that the יָרָא word group means 'reverence', ethical behaviour, etc.*

The argument that the יָרָא word group means 'reverence', ethical behaviour, etc. rather than 'fear' depends entirely on its collocation with terms for these other acts.²¹ Such collocations occur especially in (a) Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic literature, (b) the wisdom literature. The following lists (Figure 1) are by no means exhaustive (though the biblical references in each case are exhaustive).

(a) *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic literature*

אהב	love	Deut. 10:12
דבק	cling to	Deut. 10:20; 13:5
הלך בדרכיו	walk in his ways	Deut. 8:6; 10:12; cf. Ps. 86:11; 128:1; 2 Chr. 6:31
הלך אחרי	follow	Deut. 13:5
עבד	serve	Deut. 6:13; 10:12,20; 13:5; Josh. 24:14; 1 Sam. 12:14,24; cf. 2 Kgs 17:33,41
עשה החקים	do the commandments	Deut. 6:24; cf. 17:19
נשבע בשמו	swear by his name	Deut. 6:13; 10:20
שמע בקולו	listen to his voice	Deut. 13:5; 1 Sam. 12:14; cf. Hag. 1:12
שמר	keep (commandments, etc.)	Deut. 5:29; 6:2; 8:6; 13:5; 17:19; 31:12; cf. Ps. 119:63; Eccl. 12:13

(b) *the wisdom literature*

חם	right	Job 1:1, 8; 2:3
ישר	upright	Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; cf. Prov. 14:2
סור מרע	keep from evil	Job 1:1,8; 2:3; 28:28; Prov. 3:7; cf. 14:16
שנא רע	hate evil	Prov. 8:13

Figure 1.

²⁰ The data have been studied by Pfeiffer (1955: 41-48).

²¹ Stähli (1974: 575) calls them 'important parallel terms' that are 'supra-, co-, or subordinated'.

Some key texts are these:

Deut. 6:13 You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve him, and swear by his name.

Deut. 6:24 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day.

Deut. 8:6 So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, by walking in his ways and by fearing him.

Deut. 10:12 And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul?

Deut. 13:4 You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear him, and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and cleave to him.

Deut. 17:19 and it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them.

Prov. 3:7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

Prov. 14:2 He who walks in uprightness fears the LORD, but he who is devious in his ways despises him.

Prov. 24:21 My son, fear the LORD and the king, and do not disobey either of them.

Eccl. 8:12 Though a sinner does evil a hundred times and prolongs his life, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God, because they fear before him.

To fear Yahweh, in such contexts, so I am arguing, is to be afraid of him because of the consequences he will visit on those who do not follow his laws, obey him, turn away from evil and the like. What punishment is envisaged for not fearing him is rarely stated, but, in line with the earlier observation that fear is perhaps most commonly fear of death, it is perhaps implied that the content of the fear of God is ultimately the fear that one may die (cf. Deut. 6:24 'to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive').

3.3 The semantic field of יראָ and its word group

Another approach to establishing the meaning of the יראָ word group is to consider it within the semantic field to which it belongs, viz., in the strictest sense, words for 'fear' (Figure 2).²² Since, as I understand it, יראָ is a term for the *emotion* of fear, and thus a mental state, I would not reckon to its semantic field a word that did not signify the emotion but only a physiological reaction to the emotion.²³

Verb	Gloss	Occurrences in HB	Notes	Other words in the same group
בהל	<i>be dismayed, terrified</i>	50	● only ni., pi., pu., hi. ● Job 23:15 <i>be terrified</i> before God ● <i>be in haste</i> (semantic development?) ni. Prov.28:22; Eccl. 8:3; pi. Eccl. 5:1; 7:9; Esth. 2:9; pu. Esth. 8:14; Prov. 20:21 (Qr); hi. <i>hasten</i> Esth. 6:14; 2 Chr. 26:20.	● בְּהֵלָה (8 X) <i>dismay</i>
גור	<i>fear</i>	10	● Ps. 22:24; 33:8 יראָ ● Deut. 32:27 Y. is subject ● Ps. 22:24; 33:8 Y. is object	● מְגוֹר (8 X) <i>terror</i> (never in reference to God)
דאג	<i>be afraid, anxious</i>	7	● Si.35:1; 50:4 perh. <i>be attentive</i> (semantic development?)	● דְּאָגָה (6 X) <i>anxiety</i>

²² Most of the words listed below are noted by Stähli (1974: 571) as 'synonyms', which is perhaps not the best term for other members of the semantic field; he however, also includes חרד, on which see below. The field was studied long ago by Joüon (1925) but he did not distinguish words for emotions from words for behaviour, and he was more confident about establishing varying nuances for the words within the field than I suspect we are entitled to be.

²³ The point here is that there is not always a one-to-one equivalence between emotions and physiological symptoms; for example, one may tremble with fear, or joy, or excitement, and faintness may be connected to desire or anxiety. Frijda (1986) distinguishes phenomena of behaviour (such as the interruption to normal behaviour when a person is seized by an emotion), physiological manifestations (such as blushing) and subjective experience (as when a person says, I feel happy); cf. Frijda 1986: 2-4.

חתח	<i>be dismayed</i>	57	● 35 x in collocation <i>fear not and and not be dismayed</i> (יִרָא is always A-word) ● apparently <i>break</i> in Isa. 9:4; perhaps also 8:9	● חַח (2 X) <i>terror</i> ● חֲחָה (1 X) <i>terror</i> (Gen. 35:5 אֱלֹהִים a <i>terror from God</i>) ● חֲחָח (1 X) <i>terror</i> ● חָח (1 X) <i>terror</i> ● מִחֲחָה (11 X) <i>terror</i>
יגר	<i>fear</i>	5		● יָגוֹר (2 X) <i>fearful</i>
ערץ	<i>be afraid</i> (but BDB <i>cause to tremble, tremble</i>)	15	● Isa. 8:13 of fearing God (מֹרָא) ● Ps. 89:8 of God as feared (ni. people)	● עָרֹחַ (1 X) <i>dreadful</i> ● עָרִיחַ (20 X) <i>dreadful, fear-inspiring</i> ● מַעֲרָצָה (1 X) <i>terrifying (power)</i>
פחד	<i>fear</i> (BDB <i>dread, but HALOT shiver, tremble</i>)	25	● :: בטח <i>trust</i> Isa. 12:1 ● חרד <i>tremble</i> Isa. 19:16 ● ירה <i>be afraid</i> Isa. 44:8 ● ירא <i>fear</i> Ps. 27:1 ● YHWH as object (?), Prov. 28:14 ● fear in the context of joy, Isa. 60:5; (?) Jer. 33:9	● פָּחַד (47 X) <i>dread; God as object of fear</i> (Gen. 31:42, 53); “ פַּחַד <i>fear of YHWH</i> (1 Sam. 11:7; Isa. 2:10, 19, 21; 2 Chr. 14:13; 17:10; 19:7), ● פַּחַד־אֱלֹהִים <i>fear of God</i> (Ps. 36:1; 2 Chr. 20:29); with suffix in ref. to God (Ps. 119:120; Job 13:11); with objective suffix (<i>the dread of you</i>) Deut. 2:25; Ps. 105:38; 119:120; Job 13:11) ● פִּחְדָּה (1 X) <i>fear (of God)</i> Jer. 2:19
קץ	<i>fear, loathe</i>	9	● <i>loathe, be disgusted</i> (with כ) Num. 21:3; Prov. 3:11; Lev. 20:23; Gen. 27:46 ● <i>fear</i> (with מן) Isa. 7:16; Exod. 1:12; Num. 21:5; 22:3; hi. <i>terrify</i> Isa. 7:6	
שחע	<i>be afraid</i>	2	Cf. HALOT, 1671a	

Figure 2.

Note on חרר

I have not included חרר among words for the emotion of fear. חרר is traditionally translated 'tremble', i.e. the physiological reaction to fear, and that seems to be the best understanding of it. In most occurrences, indeed, 'fear' (the emotion) would be a quite satisfactory meaning, but in favour of a physiological rather than an emotional sense are the following usages: Exod. 19:18 וַיִּחַרְרַר כָּל-הָהָר מְאֹד 'and the whole mountain trembled greatly' (it would be strange to have the mountain 'fearing', in a context that is not particularly poetic); 1 Sam. 28:5 וַיִּיָּאֵר לִבּוֹ מְאֹד 'and [Saul] was afraid and his heart trembled greatly' ('and his heart was greatly afraid' seems less likely). The idiomatic use of חרר as 'come trembling, turn trembling' (Gen. 42:28; 1 Sam. 16:4; 21:2; Hos. 11:10,11) may be further evidence of the appropriateness of this translation. The fact that חרר can be paralleled to ירא (Isa. 41:5) does not of course make it a word for an emotion.

This survey of the semantic field of words for 'fear' shows that the ירא word group belongs to a wider group of words for 'fear' which behave very similarly. I find no evidence for distinguishing among these terms. Though in two cases (לבהל²⁴ and perhaps ראג), there is or may be evidence of a semantic development, in no case do words of this semantic field demonstrate a semantic development from 'fear' to 'respect', still less to 'act justly' or 'show appropriate religious behaviour'.²⁵ Most occurrences of the 'fear of God' use the ירא word group, but פחד is also used in exactly the same senses, and no distinction can be found between the two terms. The fact that the other terms are not much evidenced in a religious sense of 'fear of God' is merely accidental, I would suggest.

As far as the 'fear of God' is concerned, I conclude that, while no doubt to fear God implies also to be in awe of him and to show him respect, and while those who fear God engage in appropriate ethical and religious behaviour precisely because they fear the consequences of not

²⁴ The reckoning of Ps 6:4,11; 1 Sam. 28:21 to the sense 'be in haste' in DCH, II, p. 97b, seems to be a mistake.

²⁵ The evidence from post-biblical Hebrew needs a special examination of its own. It is often claimed, for example, that 'fear of God' in Ben Sira means 'humble devotion' (cf. Haspecker 1967; Irwin 1995: 552. On the evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Romaniuk 1963; De Vries 1965). I make no comment on these matters here.

doing so, these can only be connotations of ‘fear’; the terms for ‘fear’ studied above mean no more and no less than the emotion of fear.

3.4 *The semantic domain of פֶּחַח and its word group*

Words for ‘fear’ form a semantic field of their own, but they may also be views as belonging to a wider semantic group (domain), viz. the words for the emotions. As far as I know, no study has yet been undertaken of this domain, nor has there even been an attempt to delineate its members.²⁶

Such a study will need to be an inductive one, working from the data of the corpus of Classical Hebrew rather than against some grid imported from elsewhere. A long-standing taxonomy is that of classical Stoic philosophy, which identified four chief passions (πάθη, Figure 3).²⁷

Distress/grief λυπή	Pleasure ἡδονή	present oriented
Fear φόβος	Appetite/desire ἐπιθυμία	future oriented

Figure 3.

In this model, all the passions were viewed negatively, and entire freedom from passion (ἀπάθεια) was seen as the ideal for humans. That did not mean for the Stoics an attempt to suppress the emotions, but rather involved learning how to cope with the emotions in ways that prevented them having too much power over one.²⁸ It will be an interesting question to consider how the Hebrew Bible compares with this evaluation of the emotions.

More recently, the analysis of Carroll Izzard has attracted attention, identifying the following primary emotions:²⁹

²⁶ See my preliminary study, ‘The Bible and the Emotions’, <http://www.shef.ac.uk/bibs/DJACCurres/Articles.html>. Professor Takamitsu Muraoka tells me that words for ‘anger’ are currently a topic of research in Paris (under Professor André Lemaire) for the Semantics of Ancient Hebrew Database.

²⁷ Sorabji 2000: 29.

²⁸ Cf. Sorabji 2000: 4.

²⁹ Izzard 1977.

Interest-excitement
Joy
Surprise-startle
Distress-anguish
Anger
Disgust
Contempt-scorn
Fear
Shame/shyness³⁰

K. Oatley and P.N. Johnson-Laird have offered this alternative analysis of what they describe as nine basic emotions, including love (parental and sexual), which is strangely missing from the list cited above (Figure 4).³¹

happiness	<i>Usually their causes are known, but they can be experienced acausally.</i>
sadness	
anger	
fear	

attachment	<i>These are necessarily object-related.</i>
parental love	
sexual attraction	
disgust	
personal rejection	

Figure 4.

These proposals for a taxonomy of the emotions, however, rest on the presupposition that the emotions are a human universal, a belief that must be called into question especially when we are considering the domain of the emotions in an ancient culture like that represented in the Hebrew Bible.³² My own preliminary researches suggest that we should reckon

³⁰ Similarly Wierzbicka (1992) adding only the emotion of guilt.

³¹ Oatley 1992.

³² See also Wierzbicka 1992: Chapter 3, ‘Are Emotions Universal or Culture-Specific?’ John Myhill (1997) has recently argued that every emotion word in a given language has both a universal and a language-specific component. I am grateful to Ed Greenstein for this latter reference.

with a significant degree of culture-specificity. I argue that, for example, that (1) the verb קָרַח, which means both ‘fear’ and ‘loathing’, may be evidence for a different configuration of the emotions in Hebrew culture from our own. (2) ‘Shame’ is perhaps an exclusively objective reality in Hebrew thought, and thus not an emotion at all. (3) ‘Love’ and ‘hate’ are probably not (as they are for us) emotions at the opposite poles of an affective spectrum, with various stronger and weaker emotions lying between them (Figure 5a) but rather are between the two of them terms for all positive and negative emotions towards others, with no intermediate terms (Figure 5b).



Figure 5a.



Figure 5b.

In any future study of the domain of the emotions, it will be interesting to see whether any term evidences the kind of semantic development that has been urged for the אָרַח word group, from a term for an emotion to a term for religious or ethical behaviour. If there is no parallel within the emotion domain, it will be all the harder to sustain the view for the אָרַח word group.

4. Meanings of Job 28:28 within its contexts in the book of Job

4.1 The meaning of Job 28:28 in itself

The foregoing discussion has suggested that the ‘fear of the Lord’ in Job 28:28 means the emotion of fear felt by humans in the presence of God. But it is acknowledged that in the scholarly literature the more prevalent view is that it means ‘true religion’ or the like, a view that must therefore be taken into account in what follows in this paper. In fact, the exegetical

questions about the meaning of the verse are much the same irrespective of the precise meaning of the 'fear of the Lord'.

The primary exegetical question is how to understand the relation between the 'fear of the Lord' and 'wisdom'. *Prima facie*, the function of the noun clause is to express an identity between the two substantives 'fear' and 'wisdom'. That would mean that knowledge in general is identified either with the emotion of fear (of God) or with true religion or the like (depending on how the 'fear of God' is understood). In the same way, 'understanding' would be identified with moral behaviour (defined here as 'turning from evil'). One can perhaps understand such a claim being made by someone who thought the fear of God was the most important thing for human existence, and who therefore subsumed all forms of human activity under that rubric. It might be seen as a way of emphasizing the supreme value of the fear of God for humans. A number of commentators may be found echoing the words of the text and subscribing to the ideology it presents.

It is, all the same, a rather enormous claim if understood literally,³³ and many would feel that no one could claim seriously that knowledge is in reality a form of religious activity. Those who resist the *prima facie* meaning of the words have three choices before them: (1) they can agree that the verse means this, but deny its truth; (2) they can argue that the nominal clause does not necessarily imply identity between subject and predicate; or (3) they can argue that 'wisdom' does not mean 'knowledge' in general, but some special kind of knowledge that is indeed limited to the religious sphere.

I leave aside the first of these choices, since it does not offer a different interpretation of the verse. The second choice is more attractive, since there is good evidence, though not perhaps abundant evidence, that the verse may not be speaking of an *identity* between the fear of God and wisdom. GKC § 141d, offers several examples that will bear consideration:

Ps. 45:9 מִרְרָה וְאַהֲלֹת קִצְיֵעוֹת כָּל-בִּגְדֹתָיָךְ 'all your garments are myrrh and aloes and cassia' [the clothes of course do not *consist* of these spices; they are only 'fragrant with' them (RSV); but perhaps it

³³ This point is seen well by Wilson (1995: 72), commenting that if such is its meaning it would be "an excessive claim, based on a fossilised misunderstanding of the book of Proverbs".

means that they are so heavily spiced that they seem to be nothing but the spices themselves, as with Cant 2:13 and Exod 9:31 below]

Cant. 1:15 יְיָנִים עֵינַיִךְ 'your eyes are doves' [this is more doubtful, for if it means 'your eyes are *like* doves', as in 5:12, then the two nouns *are* identical, though in a poetical and not a literal way; if it means 'your eyes are (like) the eyes of doves' then the two nouns are *not* identical]

Ps. 23:5 הִנֵּי כוֹסִי lit. 'my cup is satiation' [this seems to say that the concrete object, my cup, is the abstract concept, satiation; and that cannot be literally true]

Ps. 109:4 הִשְׁטַנְנִי וְאֲנִי הַפֶּלֶה 'In return for my love they denounce me, and I am prayer' [does this mean 'all I can do is pray' (NJB) or 'but I am a man of prayer' (REB)?; certainly 'I' am not 'prayer' in any literal sense]³⁴

Job 8:9 אֲנִי חֲמול lit. 'we are yesterday' [i.e. 'we are but of yesterday' (KJV)]

Job 12:12 בִּישׁוּשִׁים חֵכְמָה וְאֵרֶךְ יָמִים תְּבוּנָה 'Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding is length of days, or, length of days is understanding' [unless the ב is understood before יָמִים אֵרֶךְ, it might mean something like 'understanding *comes with* length of days']

Cant. 2:13 וְהַגִּפְנִים סִמְדָּר 'and the vines are blossom' [this sounds like 'the vines are all blossom', 'the vines are nothing but blossom'; if so, the poet is alleging an *identity* between vines and blossom, and so this is not a valid example]

Exod. 9:31 הַשְּׁעֵרָה אָכִיב וְהַפִּשְׁתָּה גִבְעַל 'the barley was fresh ears and the flax was bud' [this, though not poetical, seems very like the previous example, thus 'the barley was nothing but ears', and is then perhaps not a good example]

Ezra 10:13 וְהָעֵת גְּשָׁמִים 'and the season is rains' [it means 'is full of rains', the two nouns not being identical]

Gen. 34:30 וְאֲנִי מְחִי מִסְפָּר 'and I am men of number, i.e. of a small number' [though the identity of 'I' and 'men of' is striking, this seems to be more a statement of identity than of non-identity]

GKC goes on to note similar cases in clauses with the verb הָיָה (Gen. 11:1; 12:2; Exod. 17:12; Isa. 5:12; Jer. 2:28; Job 29:15).³⁵

³⁴ Ed Greenstein tells me that in modern Hebrew (high register) one says, not אֲנִי מְקַנֶּה 'I am hoping' but אֲנִי מְקַנָּה 'I am hope'.

³⁵ I have regrettably not been able to consult Miller (1999), where, I understand, such sentences are further discussed.

In summary: (1) There are fewer valid examples than may at first appear, though no doubt others exist that are not mentioned by Gesenius. (2) When the relation between two nouns in a nominal clause is not one of identity, it is not easy to say what the relation is. It might be that one noun is being said to come from the other, or to come into being alongside the other, or to be full of the other.³⁶ On this basis, it would be possible to suggest that when it is said that the fear of God 'is' wisdom it may not mean that wisdom consists of the fear of God or that wisdom and the fear of God are the same thing, or that theology is epistemology. It might mean that to fear God is a very wise thing to do, an act that is full of wisdom, or that the fear of God arises from wisdom.

The third possible interpretation, that 'wisdom' does not mean 'knowledge' in general, but some special kind of knowledge, will be easier to consider once we have widened the horizon for interpretation to the whole of the poem of Job 28.

Clearly, we cannot expect to reach a solution to the exegetical problems of this verse without giving attention to its wider contexts, but an initial concentration upon the verse itself has opened up possibilities that can be further explored.

4.2 *The meaning of Job 28:28 within the horizon of Job 28*

The next step in the exegetical process should be to consider the verse within its most immediate context, i.e. the poem of Job 28 to which it forms the conclusion.

I would first like to deal with what I regard to three mistakes in the interpretation of Job 28.

- (1) There is no reason to think that wisdom is being personified in this poem,³⁷ and far less that we have before us the figure of Lady Wisdom.

³⁶ The grammar of Paul Joüon analysed the predicate noun in a nominal clause as (1) the material from which something is made, (2) the thing contained, as predicate of the containing object, (3) the measure as predicate of the thing measured, (4) the noun מִסְפָּר as predicate of the thing numbered, (5) an abstract quality or a concrete particularity, or (6) the explanation as predicate of the thing explained (Joüon-Muraoka, II, § 154e).

³⁷ As Hölscher 1937: 65; Dhorme 1967: 414 ('metaphysical wisdom, a personified being'); Crenshaw 1982: 97-98. Terrien (1963: 195) thinks it is 'a concrete reality' but not a hypostasis.

(2) It seems to be a mistaken reading of the poem to see its theme as the inaccessibility of wisdom to humans,³⁸ and still more to find in Job 28:28 signs of a crisis in the wisdom tradition, which had hitherto taken the view that the scope of wisdom was universal and that all of life's experiences could be managed by wisdom.³⁹ Whatever the relation of human and divine wisdom according to this poem, the final verse (28:28) appears unmistakable that wisdom is within human grasp; fearing God and turning aside from evil are human capacities,⁴⁰ and thus also are, according to this verse, the concomitant 'wisdom' and 'understanding'.

(3) It is not infrequently argued that v. 28 does not belong to the poem, but is a later addition that is out of harmony with the remainder of the poem.⁴¹ It is sometimes said that the verse is prosaic and lacking in balance.⁴² I cannot prove that v. 28 is original, but I see it as a failure of nerve to excise it because of its difficulty.

There seem to me two main ways of construing the theme of the poem.⁴³ One is as a contrast between two kinds of wisdom. The other is as a statement of the superlative value of wisdom.

The most common view has been that the poem makes a contrast between human skill, knowledge and ingenuity—as represented in the technology of mining (vv. 1-11)—and a superior wisdom that is known to God (esp. vv. 23-27) and thereafter made accessible to humans (v. 28). The purpose of the poem on this understanding is to encourage humans

³⁸ Driver and Gray 1921: 234; Crenshaw 1982: 58-61; Westermann 1981: 137. The poem is often titled 'The Inaccessibility of Wisdom' (so e.g. Terrien 1963: 191).

³⁹ So Zimmerli 1964. Fiddes (1996) has rightly rejected both these unsustainable positions.

⁴⁰ Terrien (1963: 195) however, suggests that the Book of Job as a whole calls into question human ability to fear God and avoid evil.

⁴¹ So, for example, Dhorme 1967: 414. Even Carol Newsom (1996: 553), who does not reject the verse but determinedly interprets the poem from the perspective of v. 28, nevertheless finds it a rugged outcropping, even 'dross instead of gold', displaying 'unbearable smugness' in a poem that is otherwise "beautifully crafted, clear and luminous, yet full of mysterious depths". "There is something shocking and outrageous about coming to the end of such a profound poem and being met by a cliché. These are the shop-worn phrases of conventional instruction found in Prov 1:7; 3:7; 9:10; and in Ps 111:10."

⁴² Thus, for example, Driver and Gray 1921: 245; Fohrer 2000: 155. The phrase 'and he said to humans' particularly attracts censure as banal, but as Habel (1985: 400-401), for example, has pointed out, "By standing outside the meter, an introductory formula may highlight what follows by deliberately setting it apart."

⁴³ Not all would agree with Hölscher (1937: 65) that 'Der Gedankengang ist einfach und klar'.

(perhaps Job is especially in mind) to pursue the superior wisdom, which seems to consist of a more comprehensive understanding of the world, and which is acquired by 'fearing' God and eschewing wrong behaviour.⁴⁴

An alternative view is that the poem does not draw a contrast between two kinds of wisdom but is simply a praise of wisdom as the most valuable thing in the world. On this understanding, the function of the mining pericope (vv. 1-11, which do not mention wisdom) is to pass in review one example of the efforts of humans to acquire, at great cost, precious commodities like silver and gold and sapphires, copper and iron; unlike these objects, however, wisdom is not to be found at certain places on the earth or under it (vv. 12-14, 21-22), and unlike all other precious objects, it cannot be acquired by purchase (vv. 15-19). It can only be acquired by the devout and the righteous (v. 28).⁴⁵ The purpose of the poem on this understanding is not very different: it is to encourage humans to pursue wisdom as a more valuable acquisition than any other.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ A contrast of two kinds of wisdom is seen by, among others, Driver-Gray (1921: 234). It does not seem very plausible to distinguish between 'the' wisdom (הַחִכְמָה) that is the superior wisdom and 'wisdom' (חִכְמָה) which is ordinary wisdom that mortals may hope to attain (as Gordis 1978: 538-40; followed by Hartley 1988: 384). Habel (1985) is attracted to this possibility but also to the suggestion that the only difference between the two wisdoms is the means by which they are acquired: God acquired wisdom by "an immediate personal discovery deep in the primordial past", whereas humans acquire it indirectly "through submission to the revealed path and Lord of Wisdom" (1985: 401). Fohrer (1963) breaks down the distinction between two kinds of wisdom to some extent by arguing that "for ancient people, its possession [i.e. of wisdom] did not only mean theoretical knowledge of the innermost essence of the world, but also practical capability" (1963: 396).

Good (1992: 292) also finds a contrast here between 'knowledge' and 'wisdom', but unlike other commentators he does not adopt the ideology of the text, and lets us know where his sympathies lie: "Wisdom, as the god defines and conveys to humans, has nothing to do with knowledge as we habitually think about it. Our culture takes as an unambiguous good, our model of and precondition for wisdom, the scientific or technological knowledge exhibited by the first part of this poem. The culture that produced the Book of Job looked on that kind of knowledge with contempt. Our research universities and laboratories and government grants would have been unthinkable in that culture, where wisdom came not from the acquisition of knowledge but from religion and morality. To be wise was to fear the god and avoid evil." Or do I misunderstand his attitude to government grants?

⁴⁵ I am most grateful to my colleague J. Cheryl Exum for suggesting this line of approach to me.

⁴⁶ Newsom (1996: 533) suggests that v. 28 should be interpreted by analogy with God's creative acts in vv. 25-27. There God perceives and establishes wisdom in the midst of the activity of cosmos creation. Parallel to that, human actions of piety are also creative acts that embody wisdom, which cannot be possessed but only experienced. Similarly Janzen (1985: 197) had proposed that "true wisdom is found 'in' the creative act; and the 'way to'

In support of this view I would further argue that the poem is so pre-occupied with human wisdom that it does not concern itself with divine wisdom at all, indeed that it does not even mention divine wisdom. On this understanding, vv 23-27 do not depict God's wisdom by which he made the world, but only describe the moment at which he established the definition of what wisdom is for humans ('the fear of the Lord'). God 'understands' (בִּין) the way to wisdom and 'knows' (יָדַע) its place because he defined wisdom when he made the rest of the world order. The syntax of vv. 23-27 is crucial: (23) God knows what is wisdom (for humans), because [understood] 'when' (כִּי),⁴⁷ at creation, he comprehended the whole created order (בִּיט 'looked' and יָרָא 'saw', preterites)⁴⁸ in order (for example) to assign (לְעִשׂוֹרָה) a weight to the wind (while, at the same time, he measured (חָכַן) the waters), when he made (בַּעֲשׂוֹתוֹ) a decree for the rain and a way for the thunderbolt, then (אָז), at that time, he did four things with this wisdom for humans (רָאָה 'saw', סָפַר pi. 'counted' [?], כָּרַן 'established', חָקַר 'knew to its limits'), and, subsequently, once there were humans to address, told humans what this wisdom is. All the references to creation simply specify *when* wisdom-for-humans was designed and defined, and parallel it to other elements of the created order like wind and rain.

4.3 *The meaning of Job 28:28 within the horizon of the speaker*

Within the Book of Job a sentence usually has meaning first within the horizon of the speech in which it is uttered, and then more broadly within the perspective of the speaker to whom it is attributed. Each of the speak-

wisdom is entry into such an act", wisdom not being something one can entertain "conceptually and contemplatively apart from action". To similar effect, Fiddes 1996: 176) argues that the answer to 'Where shall wisdom be found?' is 'in exercising it'. While agreeing that wisdom in the chapter does not mean 'the secrets of the universe' and the like, I am nevertheless inclined to think that the text is even more down to earth.

⁴⁷ The כִּי must mean 'when' because it is the correlative of אָז 'then' in v. 27. 'Because' is to be understood as constituting the relationship between v. 23 and v. 24: the reason why God knows the way to wisdom is because he established it in the first place. It would be much weaker to understand that the reason why God knows the way to wisdom is that 'he looks to the ends of the earth'. And it would suggest that wisdom is located at some place on earth, which is of course contrary to what the poem as a whole is saying. For כִּי as 'when', see also Dhorme (1967: 411-12); Gordis (1978: 302).

⁴⁸ For the understanding of these verbs as referring to creation rather than to the present, see Gordis 1978: 300; Pope 1973: 198; Habel 1985: 389, 391.

ers in the book has his own position to maintain, and the significance of each sentence needs to be considered within the overall outlook and argument of the speaker.⁴⁹

Now as the Book of Job stands, chap. 28 is attributed to Job himself. The last speaker's name to be mentioned is that of Job (in 27:1). Yet it is almost universally agreed that by no means could this poem be set in the mouth of Job.⁵⁰ Even chap. 27 cannot all be Job's (though vv. 2-6 is indisputably his, and vv 11-12 are probably). It cannot be Job who says, 'Let my enemy be as the wicked' (27:7), still less who describes the portion of the wicked from God (27:13-22). These verses are more probably what remains of Zophar's third speech. And as for chap. 28, it can hardly be Job who urges the acquisition of wisdom, still less who recommends the fear of the Lord and turning aside from evil, since it was precisely that that was his speciality as the book opened (1:1).

The usual view is of course that the poem is unattributable to any of the speakers in the book, that it is an 'independent poem'.⁵¹ Habel niftily categorizes explanations of its position as 'an erratic intrusion, an inspired intermezzo',⁵² a superfluous prelude, and an orthodox afterthought'.⁵³ Yet the independence of Job 28 is a more implausible view than is generally recognized, for no reason can easily be offered for the presence of such an unspoken chapter within a book that is, apart

⁴⁹ See Clines 1982.

⁵⁰ From time to time a defence of the attribution to Job is mounted. Budde (1896: 155-156) was an unlikely champion of this cause, though he thought that in it Job had given up his problem in despair. Driver too set out the arguments (though without conviction) in his *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (1920: 423-24, cited in Driver and Gray 1921: 233). Among more recent commentators, Janzen takes this position (1985: 187-201), while Good (1990: 290-93), though thinking it was not originally Job's, is determined to interpret it as such now that it holds its present position in the book. Most recently, Cornelia Cyss-Wittenstein (2000) has invoked the Bakhtinian concepts of heteroglossia, dialogism and the carnivalesque to argue a case for reading the whole of chaps. 26-31 as Job's (=www.gtu.edu/library/Gravitas/Winter2000-1.html).

⁵¹ So, for example, Gray, in Driver and Gray 1921: I, 232. Some think it intrusive and inappropriate, others that it is from the author of Job but not designed for this place (Dhorme 1967: li; Rowley 1970: 226), others that it was an earlier sketch by the author of Job on the Joban theme (Gordis 1978: 298), others still that though it was written by the author of Job it was not he but a disciple who included it in the Book of Job (Terrien 1963: 192).

⁵² An 'interlude', says De Wilde (1974: 268), a 'meditative interlude', says Newsom (1996: 528), a 'musical interlude', says Terrien (1963: 191), a 'bridge' says Hartley (1988: 373).

⁵³ Habel 1985: 391. Jürgen van Oorschot (1994) categorizes the proposals as: bridge, interlude, counterpoint.

from its prologue and dialogue, nothing but speeches.⁵⁴ Much more attractive would be a proposal that attributed the chapter to one of the interlocutors.

My suggestion is that Job 28 is the last and climactic element of the Elihu speeches. Chaps. 32–37, on this theory, originally stood before chap. 28, and were displaced to their present place in the course of transmission.⁵⁵

Evidence for the Relocation of the Elihu Speeches

The traditional location of the Elihu speeches has some problems: (1) The opening verse of the introduction (32:1) implies that the three friends of Job have just now ceased to answer Job, whereas they last appear to have spoken as long ago as chap. 25. (2) At the end of his final speech (31:35–37), Job calls on God to answer him, but he does not do so until all the Elihu speeches are over; when he replies in 38:1 it is as if nothing had intervened.

If the Elihu speeches were originally designed to come after chap. 27, all four of Job's friends would then have spoken before Job's final speech of chaps. 29–31, and the voice from the whirlwind (chaps. 38–41) would be an immediate response to Job's speech. At the same time, this orphaned poem on wisdom (chap. 28) could be assigned to one of the speakers in the Joban dialogue.

Parallels between Job 28 and the Elihu speeches include: wisdom and the fear of God (28:28; cf. 37:24; and see below), the wisdom of animals (28:7–8; cf. 35:11), meteorology (28:25–26; cf. 36:27–30, 32; 37:2–6, 9–12, 15–16).

If then chap. 28 is to be understood within the horizon of the speeches of Elihu, some new possibilities are opened up for the sense of v. 28. It has been a major theme of Elihu that God is the great Teacher of humans, and so arranges his world that humans may come by intellectual endeavour to understand something of the divine intention and character.

⁵⁴ Andersen (1975: 224) at least recognizes the problem, but suggests a little lamely that the speaker is the narrator.

⁵⁵ I will present the theory as a paper, 'Putting Elihu in his Place: A Proposal for the Relocation of Job 32–37', at the SBL Annual Meeting in Toronto in November 2002. See also my forthcoming commentary, Job 21–42 (Word Biblical Commentary, 18; Dallas: Word Books). I found at the Colloquium that Professor Edward Greenstein has also come to this conclusion; see his paper in this volume.

God as Teacher in the Speeches of Elihu

The first means of divine instruction considered by Elihu are nightmares:

For God speaks in one way,
 and in two, though people do not perceive it.
 In a dream, in a vision of the night,
 when deep sleep falls on mortals,
 while they slumber on their beds,
 then he opens their ears,
 and terrifies them with warnings,
 that he may turn them aside from their deeds,
 and keep them from pride,
 to spare their souls from the Pit,
 their lives from traversing the River (33:14-18 NRSV).

If nightmares are his first means of teaching humans, suffering in general is his second language, as Alonso Schökel says (33:19-28): pain is a chastening that can have a happy outcome if a divine being is at hand to 'declare to humans what is right for them' (if that is the correct understanding of 33:23).

God as Teacher next appears in:

Because of the multitude of oppressions people cry out;
 they call for help because of the arm of the mighty.
 But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker,
 who gives strength in the night,
 who teaches us more than the animals of the earth,
 and makes us wiser than the birds of the air?' (35:9-11 NRSV)

For Elihu God is not primarily a saviour but a creator and a teacher; his blessings for humans are above all on the intellectual and cognitive plane (teaching and making wise, 35:11). If humans are in distress, he means to say, it would be better to *understand* that distress than merely to *escape* from it. The victims of oppression would find their prayers answered if they saw their suffering as a learning opportunity, first for endurance ('songs in the night') and secondly for wisdom about its meaning as

intended by God ('teaches us', 'makes us wise'). Simply to cry out in pain is to align oneself with the animals, who lack understanding.

In 36:8-10, in the same strain, Elihu envisages the divine response to transgression (v 9b) not as punishment but as the delivery of corrective 'instruction':

And if they are bound with fetters,
and held fast with the bonds of affliction,
then he declares to them what they have done
and their transgressions, that they are behaving arrogantly.
He opens their ears to instruction,
and commands that they turn from iniquity.

In 36:22 Elihu makes a further move in his depiction of God as Teacher: not just his correction of humans but now his deeds in creation are seen as his teaching, and the whole created universe becomes the vehicle of divine instruction (explicit in 36:31-32; 37:13,23-24):

Behind, God is exalted in his power;
who is a teacher like him?

If now Job 28 is attributed to Elihu, it becomes intelligible why the poem should come to a climax with its encouragement to the pursuit of wisdom and its assertion that it is through the fear of God and right behaviour that wisdom will be found. Elihu has all along been saying that what Job needs, and what, by extension, humans generally need, is *understanding*—of God's purposes and intentions, of how the world is ordered. They need wisdom more than repentance, and it is wisdom that God offers to those who are willing to accept his instruction (e.g. 36:8-10). The last of Elihu's speeches as they now stand in the book concludes on a very similar note, with those who are wise among humans 'fearing' the Almighty because of his power and justice (37:23-24).⁵⁶

But the Almighty we cannot find;
his power is beyond our ken,

⁵⁶ לֹא־יֵרְאֶה קִלְחַמֵּי־לֵב is literally 'he does not see those who are wise of heart', which is hard to make sense of. It can hardly mean those 'wise in their own conceit' (RSV), since that is בְּעֵינֵי קָם and 'wise of heart' always has a positive sense (see Gordis 1978: 434).

yet in his great righteousness he does not pervert justice.
 Therefore mortals pay him reverence,
 and all who are wise fear him (37:23-24 REB).

The language is so close to what we have in 28:28 that it is quite surprising that a connection has not previously been drawn between Job 28 and the speeches of Elihu. The only difference between 37:24 and 28:28 is that in 37:24 it is said that those who are wise fear God, and in 28:28 that those who fear God are wise. The parallel has the further value of making 28:28 less categorical and theoretical than it has appeared to many: it is not a statement about epistemology but a sententious remark that it is wise to fear the Lord and keep clear of evil. The abstract nouns 'wisdom' and 'understanding' and 'fear of the Lord' tempt us to imagine that we are dealing with a general proposition, but 37:24 invites us to rework the sentence in concrete language. It is not a question of whether humans may or may not have access to universal or divine wisdom; rather, it is being said that God, who has perfect wisdom, since he 'established' (כִּוֵּן *high.*) it and 'researched' (חִקֵּךְ) it (28:27), tells humans how they may act wisely: by 'fearing' him and by living rightly.

Within the horizon of the Elihu speeches, then, the apparent grandiosity and global claim of 28:28 are much reduced, and its function becomes not so much an encouragement to 'acquire wisdom' as if it were the key to the secret workings of the universe,⁵⁷ but, more simply, an exhortation to 'be wise', by accepting God's instruction.⁵⁸

4.4 *The meaning of Job 28:28 within the horizon of the book of Job*

The Book of Job contains so many conflicting voices that we should hesitate to ascribe any opinion expressed in it to the author of the book or to speak of the world view of the book or its outlook on the basis of any particular sentence that it contains. Since Job himself is under a huge

⁵⁷ Rowley (1970: 234) concedes that "wisdom in vv. 1-27 is not necessarily to be equated with scientific or philosophical penetration into the secrets of the universe or the nature of reality". Dhorme (1967: li), by contrast, thought the issue was "the intrinsic nature of wisdom and the mystery of knowledge".

⁵⁸ Good (1990: 292-293), steadfastly interpreting Job 28 as Job's speech, has Job defining the 'evil' he must avoid as the deity he has been charging with wrongdoing; wisdom for him would then be evading the god, and "perhaps we need even to see 'fear' resuming its literal sense".

misapprehension about the reason for his suffering, and since all the friends are equally ignorant of its true cause (though readers know it), everything the interlocutors say is in principle what the book does *not* say. We cannot even be sure that we are meant to take the divine speeches entirely at their face value, since the character God is himself a creature of the narrator, whose theological position is not at all identical with that of the voice from the whirlwind.⁵⁹

So even if and when we feel we understand Job 28:28 within its immediate context (Job 28) and its intermediate context (the speeches of Elihu, according to the suggestion made here), we have yet to consider whether or to what extent the verse may represent the view of the Book of Job as a whole.

As a first clue, I would draw attention to the striking parallel between the language of 28:28 and the opening verse of the book. If the speaker of 28:28 recommends that humans (and more especially, Job) do the wise thing in fearing God and turning aside from evil, that is precisely what Job has already done all his life. It is hard not to see the relation between these sentences as ironic. If fearing God and turning aside from evil is what has got Job into this unhappy condition (and that is the thrust of the prologue), the value of this prescription for life is seriously undermined.⁶⁰

Secondly, the concern of Job 28 with the acquisition of wisdom may be viewed as a distraction from a more important concern, the question of justice. Job's complaint is that he is being treated unjustly, and that by God; no amount of good advice about gaining wisdom can address that complaint. In fact, to turn a question of justice, which is a social and political question, into a question of wisdom, which is an intellectual issue and certainly a privatized matter, may itself be an injustice. Some accounts of the divine speeches have the deity making exactly this move, which is, from Job's point of view, to add insult to the original injury

⁵⁹ See further Clines 1990.

⁶⁰ Habel (1985: 392-393) clearly sees this point: "[I]s this the final solution of Job or the poet? Hardly! For clearly, 'fear/piety' (*yir'ā*) has not provided Job with the wisdom to understand the crisis he faced. For Job to return to the traditional 'fear of the Lord' would therefore mean returning to a posture of pious unquestioning submission which the friends had advocated all along and which he had repudiated time and again." Similarly, Robertson (1977: 46): "This is precisely the wisdom Job has followed all his life ... and where has it got him: the ash-heap. Some wisdom!"

against his person.⁶¹ In the name of justice, therefore, the tendency of the Elihu speeches, climaxing in 28:28, should be resisted.

Thirdly, the existence of the epilogue is crucial in addressing the tendency that 28:28 enshrines. For the epilogue affirms that nothing less than the restitution of Job will serve; it cannot be a restoration of what he has lost, for his children remain dead, but it is the best restitution that can be achieved under the circumstances. Chapter 42 may be read as Job retiring into domesticity from the public arena of the administration of justice, with any 'wisdom' he may have gained from his experiences put in a safe deposit, and his only performance of religious duties a mopping up operation on behalf of his friends (42:10), while his friends and relatives accept that what has happened to him has been no desert of his but 'harm that Yahweh brought upon him' (42:11)—unjustly, it is implied. It is not acquisition of wisdom that has brought about the change in Job's condition (if anything, Job's statement in 42:2-6 is a repudiation of wisdom), but simply, for all we can tell, Yahweh's tiring of tormenting him. When Job dies, an old man and full of days, he is surrounded by 22,000 farm animals, and 10,000 or more of four generations of his own descendants (if they are as prolific as he has been); there are no sages or disciples or books of theology in his environs, and he never utters another word. At the very least, the epilogue adds a quizzical marginal note to Elihu's self-assured theology, not so much to deny it as to sideline it.

In brief, if 28:28 affirms that fearing God is the wise thing to do, the Book of Job may be read as responding, It is indeed—if you are looking for a wise thing to do. But the book knows also of a world in which being wise is not the most important value, a world where dreaming up beautiful names for beautiful daughters and living to see one's great-great-grandchildren are the business of a full life.

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⁶¹ I prefer to think that the divine speeches deny any responsibility on God's part for what happens in the world; see Clines (forthcoming).

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WORDS OF COGNITION IN JOB 28: HEBREW AND GREEK

Takamitsu Muraoka

The international research project, Semantics of Ancient Hebrew Database, is primarily a critical evaluation of semantic and lexical studies published on Ancient Hebrew since the end of World War II. It also purports to point to important lacunae and possible new directions and areas of investigation yet to be undertaken. As can be seen from past publications of the project, the research covers a number of areas: distribution of the lexeme concerned within the corpus, its etymology and roots, morphological features, paradigmatic and syntagmatic aspects, lexical/semantic fields, ancient versions of the Old Testament, and exegetical issues.¹ In my paper I would like to address one of those areas, namely ancient versions, and more specifically the Greek version, the Septuagint (LXX).²

Within the discipline of the Old Testament and Hebrew studies the LXX, the oldest part of which goes back to the third century BCE, is usually approached from two angles: that of textual criticism and Hebrew lexicography. On the one hand, the LXX is studied as an important source of information and data for the purpose of establishing an earlier form of the Hebrew (and Aramaic) Bible text, earlier than the *textus receptus* dating from the early eleventh century CE. On the other hand, this ancient Greek translation is thought to be able to throw some valuable light on obscure or only rarely occurring Hebrew and Aramaic words and expressions, because its translators lived very much closer than we to the authors of biblical books, closer in time and place alike. In the case of Job 28, the first word of vs. 11, מַבְּכִי, rendered βάθη, ‘the depths’, a rendering which used to puzzle students of the book, is now said to have been vindicated by an Ugaritic lexeme spelled *mbk* ‘the springs’.³

¹ See, for example, Muraoka 1998: xx + 151.

² The Greek text used is that as edited by Ziegler (1982) for the critical Göttingen edition.

³ Pope 1965: 180f. Another rare (3x) word, רִאמֹר, (vs. 18), conjectured to signify ‘corals’, was taken by the Greek translator with his μετέωρα to be a common word, spelled

These two approaches are still unquestionably valid and valuable. There is, however, another possible approach, which applies not only to the LXX, but to all ancient versions, even to Saadia's Arabic version. One could study these versions as a depository of ancient biblical exegesis and interpretation. One would then need to study them not piecemeal, focussing on particular lexemes or phrases in isolation, but study them as a self-contained document, even if they do not represent an original composition. My colleagues in the semantics research project were time and again made aware of this. Such a perspective and interest in the ancient versions is reflected in several contemporary ongoing projects of translating these ancient versions into modern languages and publishing commentaries on them.⁴ My own current research project, compilation of a Greek-English lexicon of the LXX, is also a tangible expression of this new trend and orientation. When one looks at an ancient version in this way, one realises that it has interesting things to say even where the original biblical text does not appear to present any serious grammatical or lexical difficulties.

1. חקֵר

Let us begin with a common enough verb, חקֵר, which indicates man's investigative and exploratory activity, his cognitive activity. It occurs in the Old Testament a total of 27 times, out of which as many as 11 are accounted for by the sapiential literature (Job 6x, Prov. 4x, Eccl. 1x), and it also occurs in the fragmentary book of Ben Sira 9 times. A related substantive, חֲקִיר, occurs a total of 12 times (Job 7x, Prov. 2x) in the OT and twice in the Biblical Scrolls of Qumran. Outside of the wisdom literature, the verb is used with reference to, among other things, reconnaissance preceding a military operation (Jdg. 18:2*bis*, 2 Sam. 10:3, 1 Chron. 19:3). The verb occurs twice in Job 28 and rendered by two different verbs: ἐξακριβάζομαι (vs. 3) and ἐξιχνιάζω (vs. 27). The translation equivalents for the book of Job as a whole are:

plene for מורֵר.

⁴ On a recent evaluation of this issue, see Utzschneider (2001).

קָרַךְ *qal* ἐξιχνιάζω 5:27, 13:9, 28:27, 29:16; ἐξακριβάζομαι 28:3¶;⁵
 עָטָה 32:11¶

קָרַךְ ἀνεξιχνίαστος קָרַךְ אֵין 5:9, 9:10, 34:24; οὐ γινώσκω 36:26¶;
 ἵχνος (ἵχνος κυρίου εὐρήσεις אַחֲרָיִךְ אֱלֹהִים 11:7, ἐν
 ἵχνεσιν ἀβύσσου (קָרַךְ בַּחֲרֹם) 38:16; ἐξιχνιάζω 8:8 (|| ἐπερωτάω).

ἐξακριβάζομαι, ‘to find out accurately’, is a LXX neologism, apparently first coined by the translator of Numbers (23:10), and a derivative of the stem ἀκριβ-, which belongs to the typically philosophical and scientific register of the Classical Greek vocabulary, e.g. Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates.

The old layer of the LXX Job appears to be in favour of the stem ἵχν-. The verb ἐξιχνιάζω is typically sapiential: except 2x in Jdg, it occurs 6x Job, 1x Ps., 1x Eccl, 2x Wis., and 4x Sir.. The compound must have its full force, not merely a Hellenistic pleonasm, which applies equally to ἐξακριβάζομαι; Job is said to be after ‘traces’ of the Lord, tangible evidences, proofs, leaving no stone unturned, feretting out every single scrap of evidence. God is said to be the author of things which cannot be traced back to their origins and evidences (ἀνεξιχνίαστα). ἵχνος and its pl. ἵχνη denote tracks or footprints left behind by animals or humans in the sand or on the ground. The equation קָרַךְ = ἵχνος is confined to Job (2x).

2. Omniscient God

By contrast, God is said to be capable of comprehending precisely those inscrutable things, a theology reinforced at 34:24, largely at the expense of accuracy of translation:

יָרַע כְּבִירִים לֹא חָקַר וַיַּעֲמֵד אַחֲרֵיהֶם תַּחֲתָם

‘He shatters the mighty without investigation and sets others in their place’ (ESV)⁶

⁵ The symbol ¶ signifies that the part concerned of the Greek Job is asterisked by Origen in his *Hexapla*, thus forming a second, late layer of the Greek version of the book.

⁶ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (2001). Wheaton IL: Crossway Bibles.

ὁ καταλαμβάνων ἀνεξιχνίαστα, ἔνδοξά τε καὶ ἐξαίσια, ὧν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀριθμός
 ‘He who comprehends the inscrutable, the majestic and the extraordinary, of which there is no number.’

That this is a deliberate departure from the Hebrew text on the part of the translator is evident when one looks at 5:9 and 9:10:

עֲשֵׂה גְדֹלוֹת וְאֵין חֶקֶר נִפְלְאוֹת עַד אֵין מִסְפָּר 5:9
 ‘who does great things and unsearchable, marvelous things without number’ (ESV)

τὸν ποιοῦντα μεγάλα καὶ ἀνεξιχνίαστα, ἔνδοξά τε καὶ ἐξαίσια, ὧν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀριθμός
 ‘he who does great and inscrutable things, majestic and extraordinary, of which there is no number’

9:10 H = 5:9

ὁ ποιῶν μεγάλα καὶ ἀνεξιχνίαστα, ἔνδοξά τε καὶ ἐξαίσια, ὧν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀριθμός

where the LXX represents the MT pretty much accurately. The use of καταλαμβάνω at 34:24 can be justified in terms of the common enough confusion between the two Hebrew letters, Daleth and Resh, but the rest of the rendering bears no relation whatsoever with the Hebrew text and can be understood only as an attempt of the translator to underline his view of the God of Job as he earlier identified in translating 5:9 and 9:10. This feature of intertextuality was probably triggered by the presence at 34:24 of the key phrase חֶקֶר אֵין.

3. *Man's cognitive handicap*

Man's cognitive handicap is highlighted by the LXX translator at vs. 21 of our chapter:

וְנִעְלָמָה מֵעֵינֵי כָל-חַי וּמִעֵוֶף הַשָּׁמַיִם נִסְתָּרָה 28:21
 ‘it is hidden from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the sky’

λέληθεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον
 ¶καὶ ἀπὸ πετεινῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐκρύβη¶
 ‘it escaped every human being,
 and from the birds of the sky was it concealed.’

Although the Hebrew text may only be talking about animals, the Greek translator took it otherwise, and that is probably why he left out the second half of the verse, dutifully filled in by a later reviser. David Attenborough might object, but one is not sure yet whether birds and animals are also seekers of wisdom. The choice of an elegant Classical Greek lexeme λανθάνω is felicitous, stressing involuntary action as against ἐπιλανθάνω ‘to forget wilfully, neglect, take no notice of’ (οἱ ἐπιλανθανόμενοι ὁδὸν δικαίαν **עֲשֵׂהְךָ** vs. 4). The translator could have used παροράω ‘to overlook’ as he does at 11:11 ἰδὼν δὲ ἄτοπα οὐ παρόψεται **יִבְרִין** **וְלֹא יִרְאֶה**, or ὑπεροράω ‘to pass over’, though not used in Job. Furthermore, the Greek verb λανθάνω, unlike in the Hebrew text, is not confined to visual disability, but denotes general sensorial or intellectual failure.⁷

4. God's self-revelation

Whilst man is struggling in his search, God reveals Himself and His nature:

28:11 **מִבְּכֵי נְהַרֹתָם חִבְּשׁוּ וְחִצֵּי אֲרָר**
 ‘the sources of the rivers they probe; hidden things they bring to light’
 (NRSV)⁸

βάθη δὲ ποταμῶν ἀνεκάλυψεν,
 ἔδειξεν δὲ ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν εἰς φῶς.
 ‘the depths of the rivers He uncovered,
 He showed his own power into the light.’

⁷ λανθάνω is used in Job another two times:

24:1 διὰ τί δὲ κύριον ἔλαθον ὦραι

34:21 λέληθεν δὲ αὐτὸν οὐδὲν ὦν πρᾶσσουσιν

מדוע משהי לא-נצפנו עתים

כל צעניו יראם

⁸ *Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version* (1989). The verbs are in the singular.

The considerable difference between the Hebrew and Greek evidences the translator's intention to underline God's self-revelatory act: the difference is partly due to his possible difficulty with the Hebrew text—**שחבש** read as **שחש**,⁹ and **עלם** or **עלמה** was possibly interpreted in the light of a common Semitic **עלם** 'strength'. The use of **δείκνυμι** is remarkable;¹⁰ it reinforces its synonym in the first hemistich, **ἀνακαλύπτω**, a verb used in another case of God's revelatory act:

33:16 **אז יגלה אין אנשים**
'then He would open men's ears'

τότε ἀνακαλύπτει νοῦν ἀνθρώπων
'then he removes a covering from men's mind.'

The use of **νοῦς** is remarkable; it underlines God's coming to meet man on his path of cognitive exploration.¹¹

Job 28:11 follows on vs. 10, which is about God's revelation through visual means (dreams). The translator's fairly free rendering by **δείκνυμι** is to be seen in the light of his choice of **ἀναγγέλλω**, a synonymous verb to translate **הגיד** at 11:6, where it is manifestly about divine revelation and where also the noun **עלמה** occurs:

ויגיד לך חכמות חכמה
'and may He tell you the secrets of wisdom'

εἶτα ἀναγγελεῖ σοι δύναντιν σοφίας
'then he will announce you the power of wisdom.'

The choice of **δύναντις** underlines that the translator is aware of an intertextual link between the two passages. Further, wisdom is the central theme of Chapter 28.

⁹ Cf. Vulg. *scrutatus est* (**שחש**).

¹⁰ Note a more literal rendition at 12:22 **יצא לאור צלמך** ἐξήγαγεν εἰς φῶς σκιὰν θανάτου.

¹¹ As it is unlikely that our translator was ignorant of this fairly frequent idiomatic collocation, he probably did not like this figurative language: see also LXX at 36:10,15.

5. *Knowledge already obtained and knowledge yet to be obtained*

The meaning of the basic Hebrew cognitive verb, יָדַע, has two dimensions: stative and fientive, ‘to know already, be aware, as a result of having learned, investigated’ vs. ‘to get to know, learn, find out’. This distinction is expressed in Greek (so in some other languages: Lat. *novi* vs. *scio*, *cognosco*, Fr. *savoir* vs. *connaître*, *reconnaître*, Germ. *wissen* vs. *erkennen*) by means of two distinct verbs: οἶδα vs. γινώσκω and its derivative, ἐπιγινώσκω.

e.g. 28:7 יָדַע לֹא-יָדְעוּ עֵיט נְחִיב
 τρίβος, οὐκ ἔγνω αὐτὴν πετεινόν ‘a path—no bird recognised it’ (|| περιβλέπω)

28:13 לֹא-יָדַע אָנוּשׁ עֶרְכָּהּ
 οὐκ οἶδεν βροτὸς ὁδὸν αὐτῆς ‘no mortal knows the way to it (= wisdom)’

28:23 וְהוּא יָדַע אֶת מְקוֹמָהּ
 αὐτὸς δὲ οἶδεν τὸν τόπον αὐτῆς ‘He knows its location’

God does not need to investigate. This divine knowledge is reinforced by the addition of the same verb against the Hebrew text:

28:24 כִּי הוּא לִקְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ יְבִיט תַּחַת כָּל הַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְאֶה
 ‘for he looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens’ (ESV)

αὐτὸς γὰρ τῇν ὑπ’ οὐρανὸν πᾶσαν ἐφορᾷ
 εἰδὼς τὰ ἐν τῇ γῇ πάντα, ἃ ἐποίησεν
 ‘for He surveys the entire (path) under the sky,
 knowing everything in the earth that he made.’

6. *Job's inquisitive mind as against Solomon's mind reform,
or Job's basic science vs. Solomon's applied science*¹²

In this chapter alone we meet with a good number of lexemes which have to do with cognition, knowledge, observation, communication or their negative manifestations:

Hebrew: נעלם, הוציא, אור, ספר, הגיד, שן, הבית, ראה, ידע, חקר, נשכח, נסתר, חקרה, בינה, חכמה, חקר.

Greek: ἔξακριβάζομαι, ἐξιχνιάζω, ὁράω, εἶδον, περιβλέπω, ἐφοράω, οἶδα, γινώσκω, ἀνακαλύπτω, δείκνυμι, λανθάνω, κρύπτω, σοφία, ἐπιστήμη, σύνεσις.

The distribution of these and some other related key-terms in the field of cognition in particular in the LXX Job compared with that in other sapiential books, Proverbs and Ben Sira in particular, is revealing.

	Job	Proverbs	Ben Sira
ἔξακριβάζομαι	1	0	0
ἐξιχνιάζω	6	0	4
ἐξιχνεύω	0	0	2 ¹³
ἰχνεύω	0	1	1
ἰχνευτής	0	0	(1) ¹⁴
ἀνεξιχνίαστος	3(only in Job LXX)	0	0
ἐκζητέω	0	4 ¹⁵	8 ¹⁶
ἐτάζω	3	0	0
ἔτασις	3(only in Job LXX)	0	0
ἐπερωτάω	2	1	(1) ¹⁷
γνώσις	0(!)	15	5
ἐπιστήμη	12	0	17

¹² The mention of Solomon does not indicate our embracing of the Solomonic authorship of the biblical book concerned.

¹³ Delete Si 18:4 v.l.

¹⁴ Prov. 23:30, which is about a search for good wine-shops.

¹⁵ Only Prov. 27:21 ἐκζητεῖ γνῶσιν is relevant.

¹⁶ A search after παιδεία—24:34, 30:26; after σοφία—39:1, 51:14, 51:21; ἀπόκρυφα 'hidden things'—39:3.

¹⁷ In the sense of 'to ask somebody to do something'.

ἐπίσταμαι	10 ¹⁸	5	0
συνίημι	7	7	0
σύνεσις	15	10	30
συνετός	2	9	18
φρόνιμος	0 ¹⁹	17	9
φρόνησις	2	15	5

Whilst the above statistics are still in need of refined processing, there are a few matters which appear to me striking.

1. The majority of the lexemes given above underline acts of investigation, enquiry, and intellectual exploration, and many of them are very conspicuous in either Job or Sir., or in both: ἐξακριβάζομαι 'to get to know accurately', ἐξιχνιάζω 'to track down', a synonymous ἐξιχνεύω, ἀνεξιχνίαστος 'incapable of being tracked down', ἐκζητέω, ἐπερωτάω, ἐτάζω 'to test', its verbal noun ἔτασις.
2. Very striking is the distribution of φρόνιμος 'prudent', an adjective denoting moral character nurtured as a result of a search after wisdom. Not once is it used in Job, but as often as 17x in Prov. and 9x in Sir.. d'Hamonville points out that the LXX Prov. gives a distinctly moralist nuance to αἴσθησις 'perception', a Greek cognitive word *par excellence*.²⁰
3. The noun ἐπιστήμη denotes *body of knowledge acquired or awareness* and its verb ἐπίσταμαι *to be in possession of such knowledge* or *to be aware* of a fact or a situation, whereas σύνεσις and its verb συνίημι are *fientic* in nature. Thus the substitution of σύνεσις at Job 28:20 for ἐπιστήμη at vs. 12 probably indicates that the translator understood the latter in its fientic sense. This is in line with the generally inquisitive attitude of Job and his interlocutors as against the author of Prov., who is primarily concerned with inculcating an already known and accepted set of values. However, the frequent juxtaposition in Job of ἐπιστήμη with σοφία as at 28:12,25, 12:12, 38:16 on one hand and with σύνεσις on the other as at 12:16, 21:22, 22:2 and 34:35 cautions us against pressing this distinction too far. All the same, the stress laid on knowledge in Job as reflected in the LXX is noteworthy.

¹⁸ Delete a v.l. at Job 11:9.

¹⁹ v.l. at Job 34:34 for σοφός.

²⁰ d'Hamonville 2001: 86.

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NON-CONTIGUOUS PARALLELISM AS A KEY TO LITERARY STRUCTURE AND LEXICAL MEANING IN JOB 28

John F. Elwolde

One of the characteristic features of the *Sheffield Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (DCH)¹ is its regular listing of words or larger units that occur in parallelism with the lemma in any particular text. In view of the nature of Hebrew poetic and, more broadly, oral-literary structure, these parallels will frequently constitute (near) synonyms or, less often, (near) antonyms. The listing of such parallels by DCH is, on the whole, one of its strengths, especially in some longer articles where the parallels are not simply scattered through the article, wherever a relevant text is encountered, but are listed together in the 'Collocations' section, with each 'parallel' followed by a full list of references.

However, the pervasive phenomenon of parallelism, broadly defined, in ancient Hebrew texts has ramifications not only of a lexico-semantic nature (establishing patterns of semantic complementarity, notably syn-

¹ The question that the organizers of the meeting invited me to address was "In which particular way does *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* describe the cognitive and cultural context of words reflecting perception and knowledge in Job 28?" Although the paper presented at the meeting took discussion of this dictionary (Clines 1993-2001) as its starting point, as the paper develops less attention is paid to lexicographical (as against lexical) matters, and this was reflected in the conference as a whole.

However my paper takes as its starting point one particular feature of the way the DCH does things, namely the listing of parallels, and applies this feature to Job 28, with special attention to words in that chapter connected with cognition. Sometimes DCH will explicitly note points that I make, sometimes it will not. In any case, by employing this feature, DCH both facilitates and encourages the kind of approach I use in this paper. If my results or conclusions are regarded as positive, this might be taken as an indication that DCH should develop the noting of parallelism, so that it is employed, as I will employ it, across verses, not just within them. But, as we shall see, in order to do that, analysis of the literary structure of texts must precede lexicographical study.

If there is a challenge in this paper to the way things are done by DCH (and by other dictionaries), it is indeed that literary analysis must precede lexicographical, the macro-must take priority over the micro-. Such an ordering of procedures is reflected in the use most readers would like dictionaries to render, namely to help them identify and understand the messages of particular texts, not, or not primarily, to tell them the meanings of particular words. The market for dictionaries of biblical languages is surely comprised more of people who want to read their Bibles with greater understanding than of specialists in Semitic or Classical philology!

onymy and antonymy) but also of a literary kind. By this I mean that close attention to parallelism, again broadly defined, can enable us to perceive the basic structure, both literary and logical, of a text. Generally speaking, of course, this second use of parallelism focuses on relationships among verses rather than, as in the case of the first use, on relationships within a single verse or another relatively restricted syntactic and literary unit.²

Looking at the overall structure of Job 28, the clearest large-scale parallelism is between, on the one hand, vv. 12-14,

וְהַחֲכָמָה מֵאֵין הַמָּצֵא וְאִי זֶה מְקוֹם בִּינָה:
לֹא-יָדַע אָנוּשׁ וְדִרְכָּה וְלֹא הַמָּצֵא בְּאֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים:
תְּהוֹם אָמַר לֹא בִי-הִיא וְיָם אָמַר אֵין עִמָּדִי:

So wisdom—from³ where is it found and where is the place of understanding? Humankind does not know the way to it⁴ and it is not found in the land of the living. The abyss has said: It is not in me; and the sea has said: Not with me.

² Due in part at least to its focus on such lower-level units, DCH rarely goes beyond the level of the single verse when identifying parallels. An exception is sometimes made for two contiguous verses where there is obvious parallelism, perhaps chiasmic, among the different members. Apart from this restriction on the range of text studied for any given analysis, the potential for the reader to gain insight into parallelism via DCH is hindered by other factors, including the following. 1. It is clear, if not explicit, that DCH's recording of parallels is a secondary and, consequently, unsystematic, feature of the dictionary. 2. The criterion for selecting parallels has tended to the omission of significant material. This criterion, in practice if not in principle, is of morphosyntactic substitutability, a criterion that entails identity of both morphological class and syntactic function of items in parallel. 3. The feature of morphological class identity is generally restricted to the level of the lemma form, so that it is unusual to see a noun-phrase listed as a parallel to a noun lemma even though such a combination could, technically, be regarded as exhibiting both kinds of identity. For other types of sequence, where syntactic substitutability can be argued for only on the basis of much less clearly congruent parallelism, the chances of being listed in DCH are even more remote. It should be said that DCH's self-constraint in this matter is probably driven to a large extent by the requirement for all parallel forms to be listed at the end of an article or major section of an article under the rubrics 'Synonym' and 'Antonym', in which multiword sequences, even Nominal Phrases and Verbless Phrases that have as their head a word from the same morphological class as the lemma, sit uncomfortably.

³ The collocation of *הַמָּצֵא* and *מֵאֵין* is, of course, difficult (but see note 25, below), although this is not apparent from DCH 1.220b (*אֵין*); however, at 5.441b (*מָצֵא*), *מֵאֵין* is glossed as "where?".

⁴ See below. MT: *עֲרֹכָה* 'its equivalent'; cf. Kimhi (ed. Bassler and Walfish, 1992).

and, on the other hand, vv. 20-22:

וְהַחֲכָמָה מֵאַיִן תְּבוֹא וְאֵי זֶה מְקוֹם בִּינָה:
וְנִעְלָמָה מֵעֵינֵי כָל־חַי וּמֵעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם נִסְתָּרָה:
אֲבַדּוֹן וְמוֹת אָמְרוּ בְּאָזְנוֹנוּ שָׁמַעְנוּ שְׁמָעָה:

So wisdom—from where does it come and where is the place of understanding? It is hidden from the eyes of every beast and from the birds of the heavens it is concealed. Abaddon and Death have said: In our hearing we have heard mention of it.

The overall parallelism here is clear. Vv. 12 and 20 are virtually identical; in vv. 13 and 21 the narrator apparently answers, or at least comments on, the question raised in vv. 12 and 20; and in each of vv. 14 and 22 two ‘mythological’ characters give their response to, or observation concerning, the same question.⁵

Now, let us go into a little more detail. First, between lines 12 and 13, apart from the absolute parallelism of **הַחֲכָמָה** and **הַמָּצָא**, there is also, to complete a chiasmic structure, parallelism of **מְקוֹם** and **דֶּרֶךְ**, if we accept the evidence of LXX⁶ and pay attention to the parallelism of v. 23 and of 38:19.⁷

Obvious examples of such non-contiguous parallels are those of **בּוֹא** in v. 20 with **הַמָּצָא** in v. 12⁸ and of ‘being hidden’ (**נִעְלָמָה**) in v. 21

⁵ Similarly, Clark 1982: 41.

⁶ Apart from at Job 28:13, **דֶּרֶךְ** as an object of **יָדַע** is found in the Bible twelve times (or fifteen times, depending on how one treats Prov. 30:19; Isa. 58:2 might also be regarded as an additional occurrence), including Job 21:14b (**לֹא תִפְצְנוּ דֶּרֶךְ**) and 23:10a (**כִּי־יָדַע דֶּרֶךְ עַמְדִּי**). On the other hand, **עֵרֶךְ** (33 times in the Bible) is construed with **יָדַע** only at Job 28:13, which is also the only time **עֵרֶךְ** is found with feminine suffix.

⁷ Structurally, of course, Job 38:19, is one of the strongest bonds between the speeches of Y. and the basic poem of ch. 28: **יִשְׁכַּן־אֹר וְחָשֶׁךְ אֵי־זֶה מְקוֹמוֹ** (28:19). It is a pity that DCH 2.465a, which notes the intra-verse parallelism in the case of 28:23 and 38:19, does not note this peculiarly Joban collocation between vv. 12 and 13, as it is obviously relevant to an assessment of the LXX reading (which, because it appears in the BHS apparatus, is recorded by DCH).

⁸ In DCH 5.439b, **הַמָּצָא** is listed as having a unique subsense in this passage, ‘be reached’. At 5.440b, DCH lists a possible emendation of **הַמָּצָא** to **בּוֹא**. Although this would bring v. 12 into absolute conformity with v. 20, the evidence of the Septuagint is rather that in v. 20 the opposite emendation is to be made. In any case, the use of **הַמָּצָא** with **חֲכָמָה** is, as DCH indicates, also found at Prov. 10:13 and might underlie the **הַמָּצָא** of v. 12 (see below). As for the other emendation recorded, from **הַמָּצָא** to **יָצָא**, there is, according to DCH 4.256a, no biblical evidence at all for either **חֲכָמָה** or **בִּינָה** as subject of **יָצָא** (although **חֲכָמָה** as the subject of **יָצָא** is found at 4QNonCanPs^b [4Q381] 76:8).

with 'not being found' (לֹא תִמָּצֵא) in v. 13.⁹ What was to be found here is hidden there. But such parallelism of words or phrases only becomes clear, even obvious, once the parallelism of the different, and non-contiguous, text segments is highlighted. In other words, literary analysis must precede lexicographical.¹⁰

The parallelism of vv. 13 and 21 also suggests that not knowing (לֹא יָדַע) something is to do with its being concealed (וְנִעְלָמָה), a not altogether unsubtle point, for on this model, humankind does not, or at least does not necessarily, lack any capacity to know, rather human beings are thwarted in their quest for knowledge by, as the final verse (28) eventually makes clear, an omniscient deity who refuses to let humankind in on his secret.¹¹

Taking vv. 13 and 21 together, then, we have a parallelism between, on the one hand, 'not knowing', and, on the other, 'not being found' and 'being concealed'. Switch the positive and negative qualifiers here and we have 'knowing' in parallel with 'being found' and 'being revealed'. Logically, or at least psychologically, the literary structure here represents the cognitive process in reverse. First something is revealed, then it is found, then it is known, that is, mentally appropriated in some way. Knowledge as that which is revealed (rather than that which is built up by investigation) is not an uncommon notion in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and the fusion of revelation and knowledge, yielding a kind of revealed knowledge, is a constant in, for example, the *Hodayot* texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls.

⁹ Although hardly unexpected, it is not registered in DCH 5.438b, 441a-b as occurring anywhere in ancient Hebrew corpora.

¹⁰ See the introductory remarks in note 1. A related point, from a translational perspective, is made by Clark 1982: 402. If DCH is weak at picking up parallels between contiguous verses, it has no chance at all to do so, given its *modus operandi*, between non-contiguous verses (in MT as we now have it).

¹¹ Just as we might have begun to think of the creation stories, the author provides us with material resonances in v. 21 itself. First, there is כָּל חַי, which (1) provides us with an allusion to Eve, the כָּל חַי אִם of Gen. 3:20, to match the reference to Adam in v. 28; (2) is consistent with the other uses of כָּל חַי in Job (12:10; 30:23) and the LXX rendering (*pantes anthropoi*); and (3) is in clear synonymous parallelism with the אֲנוֹשׁ destined to ignorance in v. 13. (In fact, כָּל חַי in v. 21 links up not only with אֲנוֹשׁ in v. 13a, but also with אֲרֵץ הַחַיִּים in v. 13b.) And then there are the עֹרֵף הַשָּׁמַיִם, who are found five times in the creation narratives, or nine times if we include the flood narratives as additional creation stories. Like כָּל חַי עֹרֵף הַשָּׁמַיִם is also used elsewhere by Job, at 12:7 (with כָּל חַי at v. 10) and in a suggestive text at 35:11, הַשָּׁמַיִם יִחְכְּמוּ, אֲרֵץ וּמַעֲוֵף הַשָּׁמַיִם, which seems to imply that birds have great wisdom (because of their vantage point for observation?).

The parallelism of vv. 14 and 22, while interesting from the perspective of Hebrew mythology,¹² is of only limited relevance to our examination of 'knowledge'. First, v. 14 appears to create a contrast between wisdom's not being found (because hidden) in the land of the living and not being (not existing at all) in Abyss or Sea. This mismatch might be evidence that v. 14 did not originally belong here (see below) or it can be defended as implying that because wisdom is absent from the watery chaos it can be present, even if concealed, only elsewhere—on earth, as we have already heard, and perhaps also in heaven. A slightly different inference that might be drawn is that wisdom only came into existence after the forces of watery chaos were subjugated at creation.

The second point of relevance bears on v. 22. Despite its superficial parallelism with v. 14, v. 22 is significantly different in its internal structure (two speakers united in a single statement under a plural verb) and especially in the content of this statement, which does not simply again declare the absence of wisdom but rather adds completely new, and intriguing, information: 'In our hearing (or 'with our ears')¹³ we have heard mention of it'. This might refer to the bitter cries of frustrated mortals, who never came to know wisdom in their lifetime in the 'land of the living' because wisdom had never been revealed to, or, consequently, found by, them—humankind is destined to be deprived of wisdom even in the grave. Or the statement might refer to the revelation of wisdom at creation, as a prelude to the immediately following declarations concern-

¹² The collocation of חַיִּים and תְּהוֹמוֹת is, according to DCH 4.226b, also found, in the Bible, at Isa. 51:10 and Job 38:16, and in the *Hodayot*, at 1:14 and 3:15. The use at Job 38:16 (הַיָּם וְהַתְּהוֹמוֹת וְהַחֲלָלִים) is significant as another link between the speeches of Y. and ch. 28. No collocation with either אַבְדּוֹן or מוֹת is noted there. Under אַבְדּוֹן (DCH 1.101a-b), the collocation with מוֹת (only here, but cf., as Keil and Delitsch (1949-1951: '[the keys] of Death and of Hades' at Rev. 1.18) is listed as well as a more frequent one with שְׂאוֹל, but there is no reference to the loose connection of אַבְדּוֹן שְׂאוֹל at 1QH 3:19 with יָמִים ... תְּהוֹמוֹת in 3:15. Curiously, this last text might relate to Job 28:14, כִּי חֲחַבְלָע כָּל חֲכָמָם בַּהֲמוֹת יָמִים בְּרַחוּת תְּהוֹמוֹת עַל נְבוּכֵי מַיִם, with the statement of Abyss and Sea ('For all their wisdom is swallowed up when the waters are in tumult, when the abysses seethe upon the wellsprings of water'). (The 1QH text here is, in effect, a mythological reading, perhaps influenced by Job 28:14, of Ps. 107:23-27, where, again, we find the combination of sea, abysses, and swallowing up of wisdom.) According to DCH. 5.200b, personified מוֹת is only found in collocation with Belial (2 Sam. 22:5/Ps. 18:5 [1QH 3:28 should also have been noted here]), Abaddon (Job 28:14), and, rather commonly, Sheol.

¹³ As the Vulgate (*auribus nostris audivimus famam eius*). LXX lacks the anthropomorphic detail: 'we have heard'.

ing God's control over wisdom and the relationship of this control to creation.

On the whole, I am inclined to regard vv. 14 and 22 (both of which are asterisked by Origen)¹⁴ as secondary to vv. 12-13 and 20-21, perhaps triggered by a desire to create a parallel to v. 4 (bearing in mind especially its mention of the 'children of pride') and to provide a build-up to the climactic 'saying' of Y. in v. 28.¹⁵

Bearing in mind that possibility and in view of the virtual identity of vv. 12 and 20, one wonders whether the insertion of the self-contained section on the pricelessness of wisdom in vv. 15-19 created a need to repeat v. 12 in v. 20 in order to restore the main thread of the poem. In other words, at an earlier stage, vv. 12, 13, and 21, would have stood together, with vv. 14-20 representing three stages of later expansion.¹⁶

Having now examined vv. 12-13 and vv. 20-21, which seem to form at least part of the essential underlying structure of ch. 28, let us now see if these verses are themselves matched, parallelistically, elsewhere in the text. Here, the answer is more speculative, because it involves significant rearrangement of the text from vv. 1-11. Indeed, the disarray, as I see it,¹⁷ in these lines, as well as their universally accepted difficulty of interpretation, might indicate that at some stage none of what now comprises vv. 1-11 belonged with what now comprises vv. 12-28. However, if we lay these doubts aside, and continue in our parallelistic mode, we see that there are four verses among vv. 1-11 that seem both to go together and, as a whole, to exhibit reasonably strong parallels with the verses already discussed (vv. 12-13, 20-21). The verses in question are 1, followed by 6-8.¹⁸

¹⁴ To be more precise, all text referring to the mythological entities, that is v. 14 and v. 22a is asterisked. In Origen's underlying Greek text, v. 22b is, apparently the continuation of v. 21a (with v. 21b asterisked); so perhaps the underlying Greek (Hebrew) text read: 'It is hidden from the eyes of all humankind, although with our ears we have heard mention of it'?

¹⁵ Cf. Habel 1985: 393.

¹⁶ Vv. 14-19 are asterisked by Origen.

¹⁷ Contrast Clark (1982: 402) who sees a very clear envelope (or 'concentric') thematic structure here.

¹⁸ For me, the logical order of vv. 1-11 is as follows: 1, 6-8 (the core text on the inaccessibility of 'silver'); 3, 9-11, 2 (God's uncovering of 'precious metals'); 4 (a statement of how this became inaccessible to humankind); 5 (a gnomic geological statement). In v. 3b, '[stone] darkness and shadow', 'stone' is apparently a scribal error related to the presence of the same word in v. 2, and 'darkness and shadow' is a gloss on 'every edge' of 'darkness' in the first part of the verse—these three words are also omitted by *NEB*. I also

כִּי יֵשׁ לְכֶסֶף מוֹצֵא וּמָקוֹם לְזָהָב יִזְקֶהוּ:
 מָקוֹם-סַפִּיר אֲבִנִיָּה וְעֶפְרוֹת זָהָב לוֹ:
 נִחִיב לֹא-יִדְעוּ עֵיט וְלֹא שׁוֹפָחוּ עֵינֵי אִיָּה:
 לֹא-הִדְרִיכֻהוּ בְנֵי-שָׁחַץ לֹא-עָרָה עָלָיו שָׁחַל:

Does there exist for silver a source and a place for gold?¹⁹ A place whose stones are sapphire and whose dust²⁰ is gold? No hawk has known the way (to it) and the eye of a falcon has not gazed upon it. Proud beasts have not stepped upon it; a lion has not reached it.

The key word uniting, chiastically, the first two verses here (vv. 1 and 6), which, on my understanding, form the introduction of the underlying poem, is *מָקוֹם* 'place'. Additionally, in a less clearly structured parallelistic relationship, there are the two occurrences of *זָהָב*. Within the first verse, not only are *כֶּסֶף* and *זָהָב* parallel, but also²¹ and uniquely, *מָקוֹם* and *מוֹצֵא*. Now, when we compare these two verses, united by *מָקוֹם*, with the next verse that is broadly parallel in terms of content and structure, we arrive, naturally, at v. 12, itself united parallelistically, as we have already seen, with v. 20.²² The primary lexical element of unification is again *מָקוֹם*, which, with its regular position in the second hemistich, binds together vv. 1 and 6 with vv. 12 and 20. This same 'key-word'²³ also unites these verses with v. 23 (where a resolution of the problem posed in the other verses begins) as well as, to some extent, with ch. 38, v. 19:²⁴

אִי-זֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ יִשְׁכֵּן-אֹרֶךְ וְחֹשֶׁךְ אִי-זֶה מְקוֹמוֹ:

regard the last word of v. 1 as a probable gloss, or addition, introduced for consistency with the metallurgical statement of v. 2b. All of v. 3, apart from the first three words, the first four words of v. 4, all of vv. 5-8, and v. 9a (as well as vv. 14-19, 21b-22a, 26b-27a) are asterisked by Origen (as missing from the earliest version of the LXX), according to Alfred Rahlfs' edition (1935).

¹⁹ I regard the final word, 'that they refine', as probably a gloss added as part of an attempt to make this verse more coherent with v. 2 (in the final form of MT).

²⁰ Reading the absolute for MT's construct, apparently 'dust of gold', under the influence of the initial construct phrase in the first hemistich (*מָקוֹם סַפִּיר*).

²¹ As DCH 5 indicates at various places, most strikingly at 5.465a, where '*מוֹצֵא* mine' is listed as one of only four 'Syn.' items for *מָקוֹם*.

²² Cf. Habel (1985: 398), who draws attention to the parallelism of vv. 1 and 20.

²³ Habel (1985: 395) also refers to *מָקוֹם* as a 'key term' in the structure of ch. 28. Of the 21 occurrences of a form of *מָקוֹם* in the book of Job, five are in ch. 28 (vv. 1, 6, 12, 20, 23).

²⁴ Habel (1985: 392) lists 38:12, 19, 20, 24, 25, 36, and 39:26 as exemplifying affinities between ch. 28 and the speeches of Y.

Now whereas 28:23 and 38:19 (and perhaps 28:12-13) indicate the strength of parallelism between **מקום** and **דרך** in Job, at the beginning of ch. 28 the parallelism is between **מקום** and **מוצא**. According to the logic of parallelism, if **מקום** is parallel to both **דרך** and **מוצא**, then these latter two terms are also united in the same parallelistic relationship. Viewed through this particular parallelistic lens, the relationship of **דרך** with **מוצא**, which indicates a place *from* which,²⁵ and with **מקום**, which indicates the place itself, the fixed point, clearly suggests that **דרך** means the 'way *to* (the place of wisdom)'²⁶ and not the 'way, behaviour, *of* (wisdom)', in other words, all three are locational markers.

Although **מוצא** as such does not occur again in ch. 28 after v. 1,²⁷ it seems likely in view of the overall parallelistic structure of the core verses of ch. 28 that the **מוצא** of v.1 is recapitulated, and in fact defined, in the **חמצא** of vv. 12-13. The phonetic coincidence of noun and verb allows the author (and us) to view **מוצא** in a new way. On the one hand, its nexus of parallelistic relationships with **מקום** and **דרך** secures its standard signification of 'place from which, source' (**√יצא**); on the other hand, its parallelism with **ידע**²⁸ emphasises **מוצא**'s status as a place where something is, or is not, to be found (**√מצא**).²⁹ Thus, by dint of parallelism and paronomasia, **מוצא** in v. 1 is no longer simply the source of wisdom, but the place where wisdom is to be found, as a prelude, as we have indicated before, to knowing it.

Before turning to the third and fourth lines of the first unit (vv. 7-8), we should first of all note an apparent mismatch between this unit and the other two to which we are relating it, namely that whereas vv. 12 and 20 are unmistakably framed as questions, v. 1 is usually, perhaps even universally, interpreted as a statement, with the initial **כי** interpreted either as

²⁵ In this respect, note the broad parallelism between **מאי** in vv. 12a and 20a with **מוצא** in v. 1a.

²⁶ Cf. *NRSV*, *NJPS* at 28:23; 38:19, Moses Kimhi (ed. Basser and Walfish, 1992) at 38:19 ("And humankind does not know" a thing that is to be compared with wisdom"); Habel (1985: 389, 399, 518, 541). Contrast Clark (1982: 404) who argues, following *JB*, that **נחב** in v. 7 refers to the tunnels in the mines, and Prof. Habel in his contribution to this volume, where he now argues that **דרך** is the 'driving characteristic' of wisdom (cf. v. 26 and the parallelism of **דרך** with **חק**). An investigation of the frequency of noun + pron. sf., where the suffix expresses direction towards, rather than possession by, the noun is outside the scope of the present study (see, broadly, GKC, §135m; Joüon-Muraoka §§129h, 146f).

²⁷ It is found only once more in the entire book, not unexpectedly perhaps, in ch. 38 (38:27).

²⁸ Apparently nowhere else; see DCH 5.438b, 441a-b.

²⁹ It might be significant in this respect that at Job 38:27 **מוצא** is spelled without a waw.

a causal conjunction, 'for, because', or as an emphatic, 'indeed', or such like.³⁰ In fact the presence of the כִּי has led to the suggestion that originally, the 'refrain' represented in vv. 12 and 20 was also found before v. 1.³¹ In that case, the author would have introduced his main theme explicitly from the very beginning rather than, as I believe he has chosen to do, slowly reveal his central focus by the use of metaphor, the interpretation of which is grounded in the parallelistic structures that the author invites us to explore.

If I am correct, v. 1 has to be understood as a question, perhaps marked simply by intonation (with כִּי emphatic: 'is there indeed?') or originally with an introductory ה (cf. 2 Sam. 9:1, **הַכִּי יֵשׁ עוֹד אֲשֶׁר נִוְחָר**, as well, perhaps, as the introductory 'article' on חֲכָמָה in vv. 12 and 20) or, according to rare usage not otherwise attested in Job, with interrogative כִּי.³²

My feeling is that commentators have been so fixated by the possibility of a metallurgical or mining background to vv. 2-11³³ that they have missed the structural and semantic relationship, at the same time obvious and delicate, between v. 1 and vv. 12 and 20, where the primary metaphor is that of wisdom as silver and gold, a figure taken up once again in the secondary unit consisting of vv. 15-19. Instead, this figurative relationship has been distorted, so that the search for wisdom and understanding is *preceded* by a search for silver and gold, without realizing that the silver spoken of *is* wisdom, the gold *is* understanding, an identification hardly unknown from elsewhere in the Bible (e.g. Prov. 16:16; Eccl. 7:12).

Just as the single introductory line of the second two units (vv. 12, 20) is matched by two lines (vv. 1, 6) in the first unit, so also the second line of the second and third units (vv. 13, 21) is matched by two lines (vv. 7-8) in the first unit. The second and third units (as the text now stands) thus appear to provide secondary and tertiary recapitulations of the contents of the first unit. If we compare first vv. 7a,

נָחִיב לֹא-יָדְעוּ עֵיט

³⁰ Thus DCH 4.388b, along with 30 other instances of emphatic כִּי in Job; also Habel 1985: 389.

³¹ See, e.g., Rowley 1976: 179.

³² See DCH 4.389a.

³³ Prof. van Wolde in her contribution to this meeting stands in a tradition of interpretation that includes, for example, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch in their nineteenth century *Commentary on the Old Testament*!

and 13a,

לֹא-יֵדַע אָנוֹשׁ וְדָרְכָהּ

assuming in the latter דרך for ערך, we see that the two sequences are syntactic re-orderings of the same proposition, with the verbal phrase לֹא יֵדַע staying constant,³⁴ and the nouns נָחִיב and דָּרֶךְ, on the one hand, and אָנוֹשׁ and עֵיט, on the other, interchanging. Clearly, this last interchange is one that strikes the reader and calls out for some kind of reconciliation or explanation, which is precisely what our author-poet attends to in the second line of the third sequence (v. 21) in which 'humankind' (חַי כָּל) takes up the אָנוֹשׁ 'person' of v. 13a and 'the birds of the heavens' (עוֹרֵף הַשָּׁמַיִם) takes up the עֵיט 'bird (of prey)' of v. 7a.

Between the two halves of v. 7, there is, of course, parallelism of יֵדַע and שָׁוֶה, exemplifying a fairly common combination of knowing and seeing.³⁵ Logically, though, 'not seeing' is, via its parallelism with 'not knowing' (in vv. 7, 13), also parallel with 'being hidden' (v. 21). Indeed the two verbs of 'not seeing' in the two halves of v. 7 match up perfectly and significantly with the two verbs of 'being hidden' in v. 21, where, moreover, וְנִעְלָמָה מֵעֵינַי in the first half clearly alludes, in the second half of v. 7, to וְלֹא שׁוֹפְחוֹ עֵינַי.

Interpretation of v. 8 is complicated by the rarity of two of its lexical items, but in general the parallelism seems to support the idea that here we have the most powerful land-dwelling beasts³⁶ unable to track down the 'place' (מָקוֹם) of vv. 1 and 6. In the light of our comments on מִרְצָא and חֲמִצָּא, the verb הִדְרִיךְ in 8a might mean not so much 'tread' or 'step over' as 'find the way to' that 'place',³⁷ providing a further example, albeit allusive, of the Joban collocation of מָקוֹם and דָּרֶךְ. It is possible that v. 8, with its beasts, which are apparently not taken up in vv. 13 or 21, gave rise to vv. 14 and 22, with their mythological referents. Note in

³⁴ As Prof. Muraoka points out, the LXX parallelism is more subtle here: *ginosko* and *oida*.

³⁵ See DCH 4.106a and note especially vv. 23-24 and v. 24 itself in LXX.

³⁶ Contrast Vulgate: *fili institutorum* 'sons of pedlars', i.e. 'traders, merchants' (for בְּנֵי שֹׁחֵץ).

³⁷ Habel (1985: 397) makes a similar point.

this respect the interpretation of שחך בני as חנין 'Tannin, serpent' in 11QTgJob 12:5³⁸ and the parallelism of שחל and פחן at Ps. 91:13a.³⁹

Turning to the overall structure of the basic poem as we understand it, thus far the reader or listener has been left in suspense as to the answer to the question posed in three different forms in vv. 1, 6; 12; and 21. Indeed the answer is so long in coming that s/he might have thought the questions rhetorical: 'is there? ... No, there isn't'. Moreover, in support of such an interpretation, the author himself has stated the apparent impossibility of answering meaningfully in the positive: the sharpest-eyed birds cannot see it, the strongest animals cannot track it down, it is hidden from humankind and birds, and, in sum, cannot be found.

However, toying with the reader as to the rhetorical or informative nature of a question or set of questions is not unknown in Hebrew poetry,⁴⁰ and in Job 28, too, finally, in vv. 23ff., there is the giving of information and the transformation of the superficially rhetorical into the actually informative. In fact, our author gives only an implicit answer to the question of v. 1, 'is there a place ...?', and bypasses entirely the locational question of vv. 12 and 20, 'where does wisdom come from'. Rather, vv. 23-27 contrast God's ability to know and to see wisdom, with the inability of his creatures so to do, as recorded in vv. 7-8, 13, 21. Thus, the tension between rhetorical and informative is never entirely resolved.

Looking at vv. 23-24 and 27 in particular, we find first, in v. 23, a relationship of complementarity between 'understanding' and 'knowing' that matches the one that subsists between the 'way to a place' and the 'place' itself:

אֱלֹהִים הֵבִין דְּרָכָה וְהוּא יָדַע אֶת־מְקוֹמָהּ:

Thus understood, הֵבִין would seem to convey the gradual accumulating of knowledge whereas יָדַע would imply a complete mental appropriation of all facts pertaining to a particular referent. Logically, the one precedes the other, even for God who, like mortals, has to live through a learning process before he knows fully, just as, in the verse that follows 'looking' (הֵבִיט) precedes 'seeing' (רָאָה). For another example of the use of an

³⁸ See also the suggestion of S. Mowinckel, cited in HALOT 4.1463b. At 41:26, 11QTgJob 37:2 has שחך 'reptile'.

³⁹ NEB has 'serpent' in 28:8b; cf. HALOT 4.1461b-1462a; Habel (1985: 390, citing M. Pope). Note that Ps. 91:13b combines כפיר and חנין.

⁴⁰ I have observed it in particular in the *Hodayot* from Qumran.

image of distance to be covered in order to underlie 'understanding' as a process (as against 'knowing' as the result), cf. Ps. 139:2b:

אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ שְׂבָתִי וְקוֹמִי בִּנְתָה לִרְעִי מִרְחוֹק:

The four verbs in v. 27 appear to outline the cognitive process:

אֵץ רָאָה וַיִּסְפְּרָה הִכִּינָה וְגַם־חָקְרָה:

The first two verbs seem to express recognition, that is not just seeing something (רָאָה) but recognizing what it is, giving it its proper name (סִיפָר),⁴¹ indeed apprehending it, that is, receiving it conceptually into the mind, and thus gaining some kind of mental control over it, in the same way that Adam later 'names' the animals over whom s/he is given dominion.

But then God goes a stage further as indicated by the next two verbs, which, like the first pair, together indicate a single complex action, which I suggest is best represented as an intensive and extensive (or vertical and horizontal) investigation. That is to say, God goes to the very foundations of wisdom (הִכִּין)⁴² and also conducts an exhaustive search of it (חָקַר). I have no evidence for such a use of הִכִּין elsewhere. Some manuscripts have הִבִּין in v. 27,⁴³ with 'he saw', 'he named', 'he understood', and 'he investigated' as four stages in the process of ever-deepening knowledge. Reading הִבִּין⁴⁴ would also provide a link back to the beginning of this subunit dealing with God's knowledge of wisdom (v. 23).

It is possible that הִכִּין has found its way into the text at v. 27 and at least in some manuscripts at v. 23 due to influence from passages describing God's creation of wisdom. That indeed is the interpretation given by HALOT (2.465a-b) to הִכִּין at v. 27, but it seems counter-intuitive that wisdom would be seen first and created afterwards! And although

⁴¹ Dr Van Hecke (this volume) suggests 'count' (as HALOT 2.766a) as the meaning of סִיפָר here. Keil and Delitzsch (1949-1951: ad. loc) understand the 'declaration' to consist of (the act of) creation itself—creation is God's declaration of wisdom.

⁴² Cf. the 'declarative-estimative' use of the *hiph'il*; see Joüon/Muraoka (1991: §54d, 163-64). Prof. Greenstein (this volume) suggests that the sense might be, rather, 'measure' (as *NJPS*). Keil and Delitzsch (1949-1951) understand הִכִּינָה as "He gave it a place ... viz., to create the world after its pattern".

⁴³ This manuscript tradition presumably underlies DCH 4.374a, which gives 'consider' as one of the meanings (or at least glosses) of הִכִּין, but provides no supporting references.

⁴⁴ As *NEB* ("he considered it"), "with 5 MSS" (Brockington 1973: 112).

Habel⁴⁵ claims that the four verbs in v. 27 are in chiasmic relationship, it is difficult to see any clear relationship between *סִפֹּר* and *הִכִּין*.⁴⁶ For 'investigation' (*חִקֵּר*) as the last stage before full knowledge, cf. Ps. 139:1b: *יְהוָה חִקֵּרְתָּנִי וְתָרַע*.

Curiously, v. 24 adds a causal clause, unmatched in any of the earlier sections, stating the reason for God's ability to understand and to know, a capacity based, apparently, on his superior vantage point for surveying the whole world⁴⁷ (contrasting, presumably, with the limited vision of birds of prey). But simply to be told that God has superior vision does not satisfy, because we have already been informed (v. 17) that wisdom has been hidden from both people and birds. If something is hidden, then superior vision is, in principle, of no aid. But our author, presumably sensitive to this mismatch, adds a detailed statement about *when* God was able to see wisdom (vv. 25-26), and reinforces it with an introductory *אָז* 'then' (v. 27). *That* was when God saw wisdom, before human beings or birds were even created. It is not a question of God's superior eyesight or vantage point, but of unfair and unmatched advantage.

The natural way to understand the perfects *הִכִּין* and *יָדַע* in v. 23, given what has preceded, is as completed actions with ongoing effect in the present, 'has understood', 'has known', and this interpretation seems to be borne out by the use of imperfects in v. 24, 'he looks', 'he sees'. The infinitive constructions in vv. 25-26 are, technically, timeless, and so could refer in principle to the primary act of creation or to creation as an ongoing imposition of God's order on the forces that militate against it. But v. 27, with its *אָז* and perfects can hardly be taken as completed actions with ongoing effect but rather as simple preterites: 'then he saw it ...'. This leaves open the possibility that the perfects in v. 23 should also be treated as preterites, 'God (once) understood the way to it, he (once) knew its place'.⁴⁸ The detailed list of activities that God undertakes in v. 27 suggests that God has not forgotten where wisdom was at creation or what it is like, but that he has chosen to withhold this knowledge from 'Adam' (v. 28), just as he withheld from them the fruit of the tree of the

⁴⁵ Habel (1985: 400). However, if I understand him correctly, Prof. Habel now sees all four verbs as being in a sequential, or 'climactic', relationship.

⁴⁶ Cf. *NJPS*: "gauged it ... measured it".

⁴⁷ Habel (1985: 399): "It is typical of ancient sky gods that they see all things from their exalted vantage point and hence know all things."

⁴⁸ Contrast *NEB*'s interpretation of *אָז*: "even then [he saw wisdom]".

informing of good and evil in the original creation narrative. Note Habel's insightful rendering:⁴⁹ "Yet to human beings he said".

God's statement in v. 28 is, of course, not an answer to the questions (in vv. 1, 12, or 20) about the existence or location of wisdom, but rather a cold and traditional statement of the nature of 'wise' behaviour as it affects humankind. At best, fearing God and keeping clear of evil is one limited feature of wisdom, albeit the only one that God deigns to reveal to humankind; at worst, it has nothing whatsoever to do with wisdom but simply represents the arbitrary command to obedience from a God who cannot bear the idea of a human being becoming 'like one of us':⁵⁰ the eternal authoritarian stratagem: don't ask questions, just do as I say!⁵¹

The recapitulation of the very first verse of the book in v. 28 is both ironic and tragic: Job was doing just what he should have been doing all along; his present situation may or may not be explicable, or even remediable, by reference to wisdom, but that is not an option open to Job because at creation God cut off human access to wisdom. Job, like all humankind, has learnt that he is in the hands of an inscrutable and, apparently, capricious deity, who, when he eventually speaks in the first person, simply expands on the theme already established in v. 28.⁵² In such circumstances, human reason is futile and humanity's only helpful recourse is unswerving obedience and prayer, that the caprice of the Almighty might be generous.

In conclusion, let us review briefly the basic structure of the poem constituted by ch. 28 and its gradual additions and expansions.⁵³ The basic structure of the poem comprises vv. 1, 6-8; 12-13; 20-21; 23-24. These

⁴⁹ Habel, 1985: 389.

⁵⁰ Gen. 3:22.

⁵¹ For God's excluding of wisdom from his creations, Job 39:17: כִּי־הִשָּׁה אֱלֹהִים חֲכָמָה מִי־יָתֵן. וְלֹא־חָלַק לָהּ בִּבְיָנָה. For obedience as humankind's substitute for wisdom, 13:5: הִתְחַרַּשׁ תַּחֲרִישׁוֹן וַיְהִי לָכֶם לְחֲכָמָה בִּישִׁישִׁים חֲכָמָה וְאֶרֶךְ יָמִים תְּבוֹנָה: עֲמֹד חֲכָמָה וּגְבוּרָה לֹא יַעֲזָבָהּ. But the thrust of these passages (and of 28:28) goes quite against the claim of Zophar in 11:5-6, where God appears willing to share his knowledge:

וְאִוִּלָּם מִי־יָתֵן אֱלֹהִים דְּבַר וַיִּפְתַּח שִׁפְתָיו עִמָּךְ: וַיַּגִּד־לְךָ תַעֲלָמוֹת חֲכָמָה כִּי־כָפְלִים לַחֹשֶׁהָ יָדַע כִּי־נִשָּׂה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים מַעֲוֹנָךְ: מִי־נֶשֶׁת בְּטָחוֹת חֲכָמָה אוֹ מִי־נָתַן לִשְׁכָרִי בִינָה: note also 38:36:

⁵² Perhaps the poem in ch. 28, with v. 28, was originally intended as the end of the book. Cf. Habel, 1985: 391-393. Prof. Francis Landy in his response to the papers by Prof. Newsom and Dr Kamp suggested that v. 28, with its reference to Job's past, leads naturally into ch. 29 and Job's recollection of happier times.

⁵³ See note 18, above.

four subunits repeatedly (three times) ask about the whereabouts of wisdom and repeatedly state its inaccessibility to various kinds of mortal creatures, before declaring that God knows the answer to the question because of his superior opportunities for and capacity of vision. To that basic structure an author has added vv. 25-27, which describe exactly when God 'saw' wisdom. At some later stage, v. 28 was added, presenting the relevance (or, rather, irrelevance) of this finding to humankind, in a form (לאדם) that maintains a connection with the theme of creation introduced in the preceding expansion (vv. 25-27), a theme that is already perceptible in the כל חַי and עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם of v. 21,⁵⁴ and also creates a link to the personality of Job as found at the very start of the book. At another stage, perhaps earlier than the one just outlined, vv. 14 and 22, the statements of the four 'mythological' entities, were added, perhaps under the influence of v. 8 with its mention of the בְּנֵי שַׁחַץ and the שָׁחַל, and almost certainly in connection with (either influenced by or influencing) the אָמַר of v. 28. Vv. 15-19 comprise a little self-contained section on the pricelessness of wisdom. As already mentioned, it is possible that this five-verse insertion actually created a need to repeat v. 12 in v. 20 to restore the main thread of the poem.

Turning back now to vv. 25-27, which, we argued, represent the earliest expansion, detailing when and how God managed to 'see' wisdom, we then see how vv. 3 (or at least 3a), 9-11, and 2 mirror this same topic, reconditely anticipating the divine search for wisdom in the same way that vv. 1 and 6 allusively anticipate v. 12. Indeed, as Habel points out, albeit from a quite different perspective, the same verb, חָקַר, is found in both v. 3(a) and v. 27, indeed at the very end of both units. For me there is no better way to understand v. 3a than as a statement of God's creative activity, with the creator referred to by the pronoun הוּא, and vv. 9-11 as God's search at creation for wisdom. Indeed, in the light of, on the one hand, the language of 'seeing' wisdom in vv. 7, 21, 24, 27, and, on the other, the running metaphor of wisdom as precious stones or metals, v. 10b would seem to represent the 'eureka' moment when God encounters the wisdom he has so energetically sought: וְכָל יָקָר רָאָתָה עֵינֵינוּ. Indeed, the implicit presence of wisdom may have led a later scribe to add the *mappiq* in v. 11, הַעֲלָמָה. The final verse of this section, 'Iron is taken from dust and stone is poured out⁵⁵ copper' (v. 2 in MT), effectively

⁵⁴ See note 11, above.

⁵⁵ Understanding יָצַק as pass. ptc. of יָצַק (as, three times, at 41:15-16 and perhaps also at 29:6), not the impf. of יָצַק; cf. Habel 1985: 389; contrast Keil and Delitzsch

resumes the question posed in v. 6: '(Is there) a place whose stones are sapphire and whose dust is gold?', that is to say, the 'place' of wisdom.

Finally, v. 4, although it remains extremely difficult to interpret, seems to deal with how far from human access the precious thing discovered by God has gone. Here, the focus on humankind (אָנוֹשׁ, גֵּר, and perhaps even רִגְלִי, if we interpret as Arabic *rajl*) echoes the inability of humankind to find wisdom, noted in vv. 13, 21, and 28. V. 5 appears to be a geological aside, a reflection of ancient misunderstanding of the imagery of the text, or, more specifically, an overemphasis on the literal imagery of the immediately preceding material that has dulled sensitivity to its figurative intent, a misapprehension that is continued in commentators' insistence on Job 28:1-11 as an account of mining procedures!

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(1949-1951: ad. loc.); Brown, Driver, Briggs (1996: 848a); HALOT 3.1014b (which, like BHS, suggests emendation to רִצָּק, the *hoph'al* impf. of רָצַק).

LEXICAL SEMANTICS
AND THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF KNOWLEDGE IN JOB 28,
ILLUSTRATED BY THE MEANING OF *ḥāqar*

James K. Aitken

1. *The cultural embedding of words*

Faced with the question as to whether lexical semantics should take into consideration the cultural context (of the language speaker or writer), the answer is a resounding affirmative.¹ Whilst there are those who would argue that descriptive semantics should be concerned with the meanings of sentences independent of the context of the utterances,² most would now emphasize that the cultural context is of defining importance.³ Research in recent years into the pragmatic force of language in communication has reinforced this position, even if it has also raised the question whether the context belongs to semantics proper or to pragmatics itself.⁴ Any speaker's choice of words is determined by both his social role and what is an appropriate utterance in that social situation. However, the *extent* to which the notion of the context-of-utterance should be applied in semantic research is a disputed issue, few wishing to build, as J.R. Firth,⁵ a complete theory of semantics upon the context-of-situation. The task in semantic research is to balance the information provided by different linguistic features, taking account of not only historical and con-

¹ My thanks are owed to Prof. E. van Wolde, the University of Tilburg, and the Royal Dutch Academy for the invitation to the Colloquium. I benefited greatly from the comments of participants and from working with Dr. P. Van Hecke.

² Fodor and Katz 1964. It should be noted that even they do not deny the importance of contextual factors for understanding the meaning of utterances. They wish only to exclude it from descriptive semantics itself.

³ The standard discussion of the topic remains Lyons 1977: 570–635.

⁴ Van Wolde 1994: 19–20, has succinctly described the recent developments in linguistics and biblical criticism that place greater emphasis on the reader in his/her social context. Two major works have been published recently on speech-act theory, which accounts for the meaning of utterances in the necessary socio-cultural conditions, and the theory's contribution to biblical studies. Wagner (1997) concentrates on its contribution to semantics and grammatical analysis. Briggs (2001) discusses its contribution to exegesis.

⁵ See, e.g., Firth (1957). On the Firthian theory of meaning, see Lyons 1977: 607–13.

textual evidence, but also morphological, syntactic and paradigmatic. Nevertheless, even if we wished to incorporate something of the evidence of the context into our descriptive semantics, how far is this practically realizable for the book of Job?

In assessing the cultural context of words for knowledge in Job 28 we are faced by a number of imponderables. First, we know little of the context of the wisdom tradition in ancient Israel, whether there were schools, an intellectual tradition or merely a literary genre. The evidence suggests there may have been more than one type of school or educational system, which complicates any discussion of a school tradition.⁶ Accordingly we also know little of the technical use of vocabulary in such hypothesized wisdom circles. There is further uncertainty regarding the date and location of the book of Job, and whether or not it was an Israelite work at all. Its literary setting places Job of Uz (= Edom, according to Lam 4:21) in the 'East' (Job 1:4) living in a heroic or patriarchal period.⁷ The peculiarities of the language of the book (see below) have led to the suggestion that the book itself is an Edomite composition, Edom being an area famed for its wisdom (Jer. 49:7; Obad. 8; 1Kg. 5:10).⁸ Finally, the particular chapter under discussion, the poem on Wisdom in chapter 28, may have had an independent existence from the book of Job, being inserted in its present place at some point in the composition of the book. Given these problems, our task must be divided into three stages. We shall focus on the verb יָדָעַתְּ, asking to what extent we can understand its meaning in the light of our understanding of the context of cognitive research in ancient Israel. The contextual and linguistic evidence from Hebrew sources will first be examined for the meaning of the verb. The semantic structure will then be clarified through a consideration of the verb's paradigmatic relationship with other verbs in the semantic field. We may from this suggest how the word might be under-

⁶ Israelite inscriptions containing abecedaries and repeated letters or numbers are indicative of some form of school tradition. The evidence of training exercises in numerals and measurements using hieratic signs in a distant outpost such as Kadesh Barnea (see Davies 1991: nos. 9.003–9.006, 9.009) implies that there would have been such schooling in major cities too, perhaps on a larger and greater scale than this. The wisdom material in the Bible has, however, been formed under the influence of a popular wisdom tradition, attested throughout the ancient Near East, and not only through a particular Israelite school tradition. A survey of the *status quaestionis* is provided by Davies (1995).

⁷ See, e.g., Habel 1985: 39–40; Clines 1989: lvii.

⁸ On the Edomite origin, see Young (1993: 136), who sees it as not impossible that it could originally have been an Edomite composition "reflecting both a literary tradition akin to Hebrew, but also a dialectal background of Aramaism and Arabism".

stood in its Israelite context, and how it may assist in the exegesis of Job 28.

2. Job 28 within the book of Job

The poem in Job 28 is an anomaly in its present position. It appears to have no connection with the theme of righteousness in Job 27 or with the instructions to Job's friends in 27:6–23 or with the description of Job's former happiness in chapter 29. So marked is the contrast between this section and its surrounding chapters that Alonso Schökel and Sicre Díaz have separated it off with the title 'Interludio'.⁹ Nevertheless, the language, rhythm, style and mode of thought in chapter 28 are consistent with the rest of the book,¹⁰ even if we cannot be sure to whom the words should be attributed or at what stage the passage was incorporated into the book of Job.¹¹ External evidence for the dating of the book of Job is dependent on the extent to which we infer an earlier Job tradition of an innocent sufferer. A person by the name of Job is included as an ancient hero alongside Noah and a certain Dan'el in Ezk. 14:14, 20, which attests to a tradition by the sixth century, but not necessarily to the book itself. The internal linguistic evidence is inconclusive, if at times even appearing to be contradictory. The relative abundance of Aramaisms¹² might suggest the Persian period, although they could be attributed to an Aramaic colouring in the wisdom tradition.¹³ Elements of the language might suggest that it has features of Late Biblical Hebrew, but this is not conclusive.¹⁴ For the verb קָרַח that we are considering, there is little to suggest that it was distinctive of any particular period of Hebrew. We can, therefore, say little of its setting in time, and we must look for other available evidence.

The appearance of the verb קָרַח twice in this passage of Job, serving as a keyword to connect the metaphor of searching for something pre-

⁹ Alonso Schökel and Sicre Díaz 1983: 389.

¹⁰ Tur-Sinai 1957: 394.

¹¹ Clines (1989: lvii–lix) proposes that it was originally part of Zophar's speech on the impossibility of knowing the cause of misfortune, in contrast to God's speech on the impossibility of humans knowing whether blame is to be ascribed to any human cause.

¹² On the Aramaisms, see Wagner 1966: 145; Sáenz-Badillos 1993: 115.

¹³ Kutscher 1982: 72, cf. 236.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Hurvitz (1974: 17–34) who confines his study to the prose portions. A summary of opinions is provided by Young 1993: 137–138.

cious at the start of the poem with the search for wisdom, reinforces the integral nature of the poem to the book of Job. חקר is a popular word of the author, attested in Job more times than in any other book apart from Sirach. The poem places the author within a traditional wisdom tradition, reflecting on the investigation into the wisdom of which he is an heir. It opens with an extended metaphor of searching for precious jewels in the depths of the earth, which extends into a search for the mysteries of creation.¹⁵ The precise message of the passage is unclear, but the emphasis is on the nature of wisdom as a precious item that can only be found beyond the confines of the natural world. A number of key-words connect the metaphor of mining with the search for wisdom later in the chapter (e.g. מִקְרוֹם, 28:1,12,23; חָרַךְ 28:8,13). One such keyword is the verb חָקַר 'to search', the searching for precious stones in the farthest limits (v. 3) being parallel to God's searching for wisdom (v. 27).¹⁶ There is a development, therefore, from the searching for a physical object to the searching for a cognitive (although almost personalized) object by God.¹⁷ In v. 27 God's role in creation is presented as including a measuring and evaluating of wisdom in a series of verbs:

רָאָה וַיִּסְפְּרָה הַכִּינָה וּגִם-חָקְרָה

He saw it and measured it; established it and also searched it out.

These collocations appear to portray the work of an engineer,¹⁸ and are some of the many verbs in the passage denoting divine action, although the only other sapiential terms used are יָדַע, הָבִין (v. 23) and *hiph'il* נָבַט (v. 24).¹⁹ The meaning of חָקַר in this verse and its relationship to other

¹⁵ Cf. Tur-Sinai 1957: 396.

¹⁶ Harris (1983) takes the feminine suffixes in verse 27 as referring to the creation rather than to wisdom, but wisdom seems to be the more likely object.

¹⁷ It is disputed whether the subject of v. 3 is God (as understood, e.g., by Rashi and Ibn Ezra in the light of vv. 23–26) or man, and it has often been argued that it seems more consistent with the following verses to have a description of human rather than divine activity (cf. Habel 1985: 389). Nevertheless, it became apparent in the course of the colloquium that the verse can be understood as denoting the divine search for precious wisdom (as Tur-Sinai believed), and this might assist in clarifying the meaning of some of the words that are not typical of mining. Many suggestions have been offered for rearranging the verses (see Hölscher 1937; Tur-Sinai 1957: 397), but the structure is complex and we follow here the ordering of the MT.

¹⁸ So Alonso Schökel and Sicre Díaz 1983: 403.

¹⁹ For a list of verbs of divine action, see *ibid* 1983: 402.

sapiential terms will have to be considered, but only after an examination of the semantic evidence for חקר.

3. *The semantics of חקר*

The verb חקר is attested most frequently in the *qal*, and occasionally in the *niph'al* (four times). The *pi'el* of חקר is only attested once in the Bible (Qoh 12:9).²⁰ The problem of providing an adequate definition for this verb is perhaps illustrated by the variety of possible glosses for the word. The LXX translators gave 20 different translation equivalents in the 27 occurrences of the word, and this variety has been matched in more recent times by Alonso Schökel, who lists in his *Dictionary* 15 glosses.²¹ In order to provide a descriptive semantics of חקר and cognates in Hebrew we need to be sensitive to the cultural aspects of ancient Israel, and choose our terms carefully in order not to impose our understanding on ancient words. Tsevat's choice of descriptive terms can be taken as an example. He proposes that "ḥqr stands for a purely cognitive and analytical examination and testing", and that bḥn suggests "intuitive comprehension".²² These definitions he offers to differentiate them from other lexemes in the semantic field, although he justifies his choice of the adjective 'analytical' by a dubious reference to the etymology (cf. below). Irrespective of whether he is correct in this definition, it is expressed in modern or Aristotelian terms and does not convey the meaning within the structure of the ancient Hebrew language. He further bolsters his definition with an explanation of Israelite theology, thereby demonstrating the cultural context of the verb חקר. The comparatively infrequent religious use of the verb is explained, he argues, by the belief that, "God's knowledge is not so much progressive and analytic as in-

²⁰ It is not clear why Clines (1996: 305) also cites the *pi'el* for 4Q378 (psJos^a) 11:8, where the presence of the *waw* in the infinitive would suggest it is the *qal*. There may be an allusion in the fragment to the use of the *qal* in Job 28:2-3 (see *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. I-XXXIV, 1955-1998) Vol. 22, p. 252).

²¹ For the LXX, see Muraoka 1998: 54. Alonso Schökel 1990-1993: 251: "Averiguar, desubrir, investigar, indagar, inquirir, inspeccionar, explorar, buscar, escrutar, escudriñar, examinar, sondear, penetrar, probar, catar".

²² Tsevat (1986: 149) whose words are accepted and quoted by Matties and Patterson (1997: 252). In the manner of *TWAT/IDOT* it is not always clear whether the author is discussing the noun or the verb or both, and therefore we have preserved the transliteration of the article. It would seem by his comparison with what can only be verbs, that the verb חקר is uppermost in his mind.

stantaneous and holistic”.²³ Although he has tried to present חקר in relation to its Hebrew synonyms, the social context of the Hebrew speaker has been given priority in his description of the language and a theological derivation bolsters his interpretation. By contrast the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships in the text have been neglected.²⁴ It is clear that Tsevat’s definition cannot be applied to all cases of the verb, as the verb is also used of searching a physical object, such as a land (אַרץ, Jdg. 18:2) or a city (עִיר, 2 Sam. 10:3), and not merely a cognitive object. That the word has such a sense does not deny the possibility that it could also mean a cognitive-analytical examination (as English ‘to see’ can mean both to see with the eyes or to perceive), but it does mean that the cognitive-analytical meaning is not embedded in either the etymology or the theological context. In particular, the emphasis on the meaning as a ‘purely cognitive and analytical examination’ (*rein kognitives, analytisch-eindringendes*) seems unlikely.

3.1 Etymology and comparative material

Etymological evidence is sparse and can be dealt with perfunctorily. In Palestinian Aramaic there exists the cognate verb חקר ‘to cross-examine, investigate’ (e.g. Targum 2 Sam. 10:3), and a noun חקר ‘examiner’ (Targum Jer. 17:10),²⁵ and in Mandaic the verb HQR II ‘to investigate etc.’ is attested.²⁶ The one other suggested cognate is Arabic *ḥaraqā* ‘to tear apart, divide’, a meaning that is distant from the Hebrew, but that has fostered the hypothesis that the Hebrew could be derived from it.²⁷ The evidence does not seem sufficient to establish this root-meaning, just as it has not been for an earlier suggestion that the original meaning was ‘to

²³ Tsevat 1986: 149.

²⁴ On the need for such information to be used to balance historical interpretations, see Van Wolde 1994: 34–35.

²⁵ Jastrow 1886–1903: 497; Sokoloff 1990: 123.

²⁶ Drower and Macuch 1963: 152b.

²⁷ So Tsevat 1986: 148. He compares it to Aramaic בִּדֵּק (cf. also Syriac *bdq*), which means both ‘to examine’ and ‘to divide’, and similar semantic overlaps in Akkadian (*parāsu*) and Arabic (*baqara*), which have been discussed by Greenfield (1958: 221, n. 24). Although Tsevat feels that the existence of such a semantic overlap and of the Arabic form *ḥaraqā* denoting ‘to divide’ jointly as good as proves his hypothesis, it would have been much stronger had the Arabic *ḥaraqā* also had the meaning ‘to examine’.

be deep'.²⁸ In Rabbinic Hebrew the verb is almost entirely restricted to legal terminology, notably for the cross-examination of witnesses (cf. its use in Targumic Aramaic), under the influence of the terminology of Deut. 13:15. Its appearance in liturgical contexts is often derived from the use of the verb in such passages as Lam 3:40.

The possible existence of a homonym has also been suggested in the light of comparative philology, and if true this would affect our statistics. Perles first suggested that the Arabic verb *haqara* 'to despise' might provide evidence for the sense of the verb at Prov. 25:27,²⁹ where the LXX, as noted by Barr,³⁰ is very remote from the Hebrew and probably offers no guidance. To this example Winton Thomas added that of Prov. 28:11 where the LXX (καταγινώσκω),³¹ Peshitta (*bsr*) and Targum (בסר) imply the sense is that of detesting,³² although the expected rendering of חקר is given by the Vulgate (*scrutare*), Aquila and Theodotion (ἐξιχνιάζω).³³ Barr has suggested that this interpretation of Hebrew in the light of Arabic is 'a substantially stronger case' than some others and proposes that at Jdg. 5:16 the translation of חקר-לב by 'scornings of the heart' would make good sense.³⁴ He remains, nonetheless, cautious, admitting that the philological suggestion is hardly absolutely certain, but is well worth consideration. We will not be so venturous, but shall take these instances to be the same verb חקר 'to discern', especially since it seems to be a favoured word of wisdom writers and, therefore, appropriate for the book of Proverbs.

²⁸ Palache 1959: 34. This has been the proposal adopted by Koehler and Baumgartner 1967–1990: 334. Tsevat (1986: 148), traces the suggestion to S.P. Chajes (1913) and suggests that Palache used a circular argument, since Chajes had already interpreted the Psalms in the light of Job 38:16.

²⁹ Perles 1922: 20. For the Arabic, see Lane 1968: 611ff. A cognate also appears in Ethiopic; see Dillmann 1865: 98.

³⁰ Barr 1968: 258.

³¹ For the sense of 'to disapprove' for the Greek see Liddell and Scott 1940: 86; Lust, Eynikel and Hauspie 1992, 1996: 232.

³² Winton Thomas 1937: 402–403. He explains that the poor man despises the rich for his poor assessment of values. The two examples of Prov. 25:27 and 28:11 had already been compared to the Arabic by Eitan (1924: 7, n. 14) who does not himself refer to Perles, whilst Winton Thomas in turn does not refer to Eitan. It should be noted that Perles only makes his suggestion in the second edition of his work (1922; first edition was in 1895), only two years before Eitan's work was published, and therefore they may well have come to the same conclusion independently of each other.

³³ Field 1875 (vol. II): 367.

³⁴ Barr 1968: 258.

3.2 *Distribution*

The distribution of a lexeme through different literary genres and different periods, as far as we are able to identify this, can be instructive. Of the 27 occurrences in the Hebrew Bible of the verb חקֵר it is found once in a legal passage, six times in historical books, four times in prophecy, three times in Psalms, and once in Lamentations.³⁵ This would seem to be a broad distribution, although if we now include the figures from wisdom literature we find that it is also found six times in Job, four times in Proverbs and once in Qohelet, giving a total of 11 occurrences in wisdom literature alone.³⁶ Taking the evidence into late biblical Hebrew there are a further nine occurrences in Sirach,³⁷ and nine in Qumran,³⁸ of which one (4Q185 1–2 ii.1) is a sapiential work and five are in sapiential-type expressions referring to the ways of God (1QM 16.13; 4Q301 1.2; 2.1; 4Q392 1.4; 4Q504 6.21). It does not seem possible to identify any particular trend in the use either regarding the era of Hebrew or the type of literature or the register (poetry or prose). Apart from its frequent appearance in Sirach, it is found in sapiential literature in approximately 40% of its instances, but there does not seem to be a growing specialization towards a sapiential or analytical meaning, given its continued use in Qumran of searching a physical object (e.g. of inspecting the promised land in 4Q378 11.8). It is not until the Rabbinic period that it appears to develop a specialized legal sense.³⁹ It can be said, nonetheless, that it is frequent in wisdom literature, especially Job and Sirach, and it is striking that it is also found in Qoheleth (notable as the only biblical occurrence

³⁵ Legal work: Deut. 13:14. Historical books: Jdg. 18:2; 1 Sam. 20:12; 2 Sam. 10:3; 1 Kg. 7:47; 1 Chr 19:3; 2 Chr 4:18. Prophecy: Jer. 17:10; 31:37; 46:23; Ezek 39:14. Psalms: Pss 44:22; 139:1, 23. Lamentations: 3:40.

³⁶ Job 5:27; 13:9; 28:3,27; 29:16; 32:11; Prov 18:17; 23:30; 25:2; 28:11; Qoh 12:9.

³⁷ Sir: 3:21a (MS C = 21b [MS A]), 6:27 (A); 11:7 (A), 28 (A); 13:11d (A); 42:18 (Mas, B); 43:28 (B), 30 (Bmg); 44:5 (Mas, B). Clines (1996: 304) gives the total in Sirach as 8, which seems to be a misprint since all 9 are referred to in the entry. The numbering used here follows the edition of Beentjes 1997.

³⁸ 1QM 16.13; 4Q185 1–2 ii.1; 4Q301(Myst^e) 1.2; 2.1; 4Q378 11.8; 4Q392 1.4; 4Q504(DibHam^a) 6.21; 11QT 55.5 (=Deut. 13:15), 19. The occurrence at 1QM 16.13 (חִקֵּר אֱלֹהִים בַּצִּדִּיק 'God inquires in justice') is a restoration by Yadin (1962: 339; in his edition at Col. 16.13 = section 26.1) on the basis of 1 Chr 29:18,17; Jer. 11:20 and 17:10 (1962: 338). The figure of eight in Clines (1996: 304) does not include 4Q504 (DibHam^a) 6.21, although he also notes that the verb might occur in 4Q298 1.4.

³⁹ Cf. Tsevat 1986: 148.

in the *pi'el*), a book that has far fewer technical sapiential vocabulary than Proverbs and Job.⁴⁰

The cognate noun חָקַר displays a greater preference for sapiential themes, and unlike its verbal counterpart, is only attested in poetry. It is only once found in a historical book, but in the archaic poem the 'Song of Deborah' (Jdg. 5:16), where it is used figuratively of the 'searchings of the heart' (חִקְרֵי-לֵב). It also appears once in Isaiah to denote an aspect of God's חֲבוּנָה and once in the Psalms (Ps 145:3). A cognate noun מְחַקֵּר, might also be found in Ps 95:4 (in the plural) and Sir 44:4.⁴¹ All the other occurrences of חָקַר in the Hebrew Bible are in wisdom literature, namely seven times in Job and twice in Proverbs.⁴² Conversely it is only twice found in Sirach, but perhaps as much as 11 times in Qumran.⁴³ In his examination of words characteristic of 'Israel's intellectual tradition' Whybray rightly notes that in Jdg. 5:16 and Ps 145:3 there is no indication of wisdom or the intellectual tradition, and that therefore this noun cannot be used as a criterion for a distinctive wisdom tradition. Although one cannot say that the presence of this noun or verb indicates wisdom influence, they are frequent enough to suggest they might have a technical understanding within wisdom circles. We will not consider in any depth the noun in this study, working from the principle that nouns and verbs should be distinguished in semantic research. The presence of the verb in a wider variety of literature, both prose and verse, in comparison to the noun suggests that the verb is not a denominative.

3.3 Syntagmatic evidence

It can be suggested that the evidence from the distribution of the lexemes through ancient Hebrew literature, its syntagmatics and its paradigmatic relationships in the semantic field will give us a picture of how the verb

⁴⁰ Whybray 1974: 122–123, n. 193. I have not been able to consult the recent article by Sciumbata (1996) who argues that Qohelet introduces a number of coinages as epistemological polemic against the traditional strand of wisdom, avoiding the lexicon connected with that strand (see also M.P. Sciumbata, 'חֲבוּנָה', The Semantics of Ancient Hebrew Database [in progress]).

⁴¹ In Ps 95:4 it has been suggested (e.g. BHS) that the text should be emended to מְחַקֵּר 'distant parts', a meaning implied by the LXX (τὰ πέματα, cf. Vulgate). The identification of the noun and its meaning in Sir 44:4 is also disputed.

⁴² Job 5:9; 8:8; 9:10; 11:7; 34:24; 36:26; 38:16; Prov 25:3, 27.

⁴³ Sir 14:22 (MS A); 42:19 (Mas).

is used, and provide evidence of its meaning within the language system. This should be considered first, before drawing upon the evidence of the cultural context.

We can distinguish the syntagmatic evidence according to the subject and object of the verb and according to its collocations and parallelisms.

A Divine Subject

A divine subject is found in the following instances:

יְהוָה – Jer. 17:10; Ps 139:1

Object: לֵב ‘heart’ (Jer. 17:10), + 1st sing suf (Ps 139:1)

Collocations: בָּחַן ‘to test’ (Jer. 17:10), יָדַע ‘to know’ (Ps 139:1)

אֱלֹהִים – Ps 44:22

Object: זֶה ‘this’ (Ps 44:22), דָּרַךְ (4Q392 1.4)

Expounded by: God knows (יָדַע) the secrets of the heart (Ps 44:22)

אֵל – Ps 139:23; Job 13:9; 28:27?

Object: + 1st sing suf (Ps 139:23), אָח + 2nd pl suf (Job 13:9), + 3rd sing fem suf (Job 28:27)

Collocations: יָדַע ‘to know’ (Ps 139:23[+ obj לֵב]), *hiph’il* כֹּן (Job 28:27)⁴⁴

A Human Subject

Object:

Physical objects:

אֶרֶץ ‘land’ (Jdg. 18:2 [substituted for *pi’el* rgl]), עִיר ‘city’ (2 Sam. 10:3), אֶבֶן ‘stone’ (Job 28:3), מִמְסַךְ ‘mixed wine’ (Prov 23:30)

Non-physical:

לֵב ‘heart’ (Jer. 17:10), רִיב ‘cause’ (Job 29:16), דָּבָר ‘word’ (Prov 25:2), דָּרַךְ ‘way’ (4Q185 1–2 ii.1)

Humans:

אָב ‘father’ (1 Sam. 20:12),

Collocations

qal –

Collocated with the syntagms:

⁴⁴ Some MSS and editions read הִבִּינָה (cf. Job 28:23) rather than הִכִּינָה. Dhorme (1967: 413) and Pope (1965: 183) have accepted the former, although the *hiph’il* of כֹּן is used in a similar way at Jdg. 12:6, where it too might have arisen from scribal error and should be emended. However, in Job 28:27 other verbs denote physical rather than obvious ‘sapiential’ activities, and therefore כֹּן might be correct.

שאל and דרש (Dt 13:15; 11QT 55.5; cf. 55.19)

pi'el רגל 'to spy out' (Jdg. 18:2; 2 Sam. 10:3; 1 Chr 19:3)

בחן 'to test' (Jer. 17:10), ידע 'to know' (Ps 139:1; 139:23), חפש 'to test' (Lam 3:40)

The Participle is *nomen regens* of שורשי בינה 'roots of understanding' (4Q301(Myst^c) 1.2; 2.1)

In parallelism with:

בחן 'to test' (Ps 139:23), ידע 'to know' (Ps 44:22)

pi'el –

Collocated with the syntagms *pi'el* און and *pi'el* חקן (Qoh 12:9)

niph'al –

Subject:

משקל 'weight' (1 Kg. 7:47; 2Chr 4:18), יער 'forest' (Jer. 46:23), מוסד 'foundations of earth' (Jer. 31:37).

In parallelism with:

niph'al מדר 'to measure' (Jer. 31:37)

In evaluating the syntagmatic relationships one can distinguish between those cases where the object of חקר is physical and where it is non-physical. In this respect it is striking that when God is the subject of the verb, the object is always non-physical, and where the collocated verbs are to some degree cognitive it is understandably a non-physical object. The exception to this is the choice of verbs in Job 28:27, which appear to derive from acts of physical construction rather than a searching of wisdom. This has led Harris to argue that the object there is the creation rather than wisdom, but this we will discuss in our paradigmatic investigation. We would do well to distinguish those uses of searching a physical object (especially in parallelism with *pi'el* רגל 'to spy out') from those of a cognitive examination. The two are not unrelated, especially given the use in Job 28 of both senses to establish the metaphor of searching something precious and the searching of wisdom, but we can categorize them separately.

4. *Towards a definition*

4.1 *Defining the word*

An examination of the uses of חקר in the context of the biblical and post-biblical passages reveals the nature of the activity of the verb. The verb is most often glossed as ‘to search out’, but it should be noted that the searching of a physical object is not an object that is lost, but one that is unknown and requires examination and mapping out. A legal use that is found in the Bible, and which came to be dominant in Rabbinic Hebrew, can also be viewed in these terms. Our proposal for the division of the semantics of חקר, therefore, is as follows:

1. To search in order to gather information on something unknown, either a place (Jdg. 18:2; 2 Sam. 10:3; Jer. 31:37; 46:23 [negated]; Ezek 39:14; Job 28:3(?); 1 Chr 19:3; 4Q378 11.8) or information (i.e. of the weight of an object, 1 Kg. 7:47; 2 Chr 4:18), or the belief of a person (1 Sam. 20:12, which could also be no. 2 or no. 3).
2. To examine an idea for its worth (Job 5:27; 28:27). This may be the place to include Qoh 12:9, if it does not have a special sense of ‘to scan’.
3. To examine a charge to determine its validity (Deut. 13:14; Prov 18:17; Job 29:16; 1QM 16.13).
4. To examine to determine one’s moral status, the examination being performed by God (Jer. 17:10; Ps 44:22; 139:1, 23; Job 13:9), or by oneself (Lam 3:40). The examining may also be of one’s דרך ‘way’ (4Q185 1–2 ii 1; 4Q392 1.4) or other facets (4Q301(Myst^c) 1.2; 2.1; 4Q504 6.21).

The semantic structure offered here for חקר is determined by the meaning apparent from its uses within the literature, where it appears to denote a search for something that is previously unknown. This has a number of consequences. First, the occurrences of the verb in Job are found in all four connotations, indicating that there is no one dominant sense in Job or wisdom literature, casting doubt on the evidence thrown up by the distribution of the verb that it might be a technical wisdom term. Second, if this semantic description is valid, it raises questions regarding particular interpretations offered by scholars. It of course

avoids the ambiguity of such frequent dictionary definitions as 'to search' or 'to search out', which could include the searching for something that is lost, although this is sometimes clarified by the gloss 'to explore' (e.g. BDB, 350, which incidentally also notes a separate meaning of 'to search (for)').

More importantly, such definitions exclude interpretations that do not seem to be derived from the lexical semantics of the verb but from contextual features. Thus, the suggestion that the 'verbal root' of the noun denotes 'probing the depths'⁴⁵ is determined by its collocation with nouns for deep objects (e.g. Jer. 31:37; Job 28:3; Sir 42:18; cf. Job 38:16). The frequent negation of the *niph'al* verb and of the noun has elicited the idea that there is something mystical or unattainable about the object of the verb. This is discussed in some depth by Matties and Patterson, who suggest enigmatically that, "The dynamic of concealing and discovering reflects a significant dimension of the word's utilization for theological and ethical contexts".⁴⁶ Perhaps the most striking passage in this regard is that of Sir 3, although it is rarely discussed in this context. The sage there (3:21) warns that his pupil should not investigate (דרש) what is too sublime (פלאת) or research (חקר) what is too difficult (מכוסה). It is strongly implied that obscure or hidden elements are an aspect of the searching, but apart from the fact that it is denied here as a proper exercise, it is only by association, and חקר need not have a special sense of 'digging to the depths' any more than the other verbs in the passage.

There remain two anomalies in the evidence that should be accounted for in our definition. Most strikingly, the appearance of חקר at Job 28:3, if our definition is correct, must denote the examining of an unknown place and not the searching for a known but not yet found object, namely the precious stone (אבן). Most commentators do understand it as searching through the rock, but occasionally it is implied by commentators that God is searching *for* a precious stone, but this is not possible from our semantic perspective. Indeed, it is possible anyway that אבן is a scribal addition, or that the object of Job 28:3 could be the 'gloom and darkness' (אפל וצלמות), or perhaps better the 'limit' (ל + תכלית), which remain unknown and unexplored, rather than the stone. This would support that interpretation that it is not a metaphor of mining in which God (or a miner) is searching for all sorts of precious stones, but that it is a picture

⁴⁵ Habel 1985: 208. Elsewhere Habel defines the verb more cautiously as often implying the process of intense investigation (1985: 137).

⁴⁶ Matties and Patterson 1997: 253, cf. 254.

of God seeking Wisdom, who is presented in sapiential terms as gold and silver (28:1). A second anomaly in our evidence is the material from Qumran where the object might imply something is being looked for, such as the path to life (4Q185 1–2 ii.1; although cf. 4Q392 1.4) or the roots of wisdom (4Q301 1.2; 2.1) rather than being investigated. It is possible that this sense developed in Late Biblical Hebrew, although one could interpret them as examples of evaluating rather than searching for something (as the land of promise in 4Q378 11.8).

What appears from the evidence so presented is that there is no presumed object or goal in the search, and it is not implied that it is either complete or incomplete. This brings us back to the *pi'el* in Qoh 12:9, where it has been suggested that it denotes 'to scan (verse)', a meaning attributed to the *qal* in Sir 44:5.⁴⁷ That the same meaning is found in the *qal* might suggest it is not specifically the *pi'el binyan* that produces such a sense, and Zorell understands the *pi'el* to be intensive ('*multum scrutatus, meditatus est*').⁴⁸ It might alternatively be resultative, denoting that an examination has been undertaken and the proverbs of Qoh 12:9 have been found worthy.⁴⁹ The *pi'el* might, therefore, be used here as an attempt to clarify the completion of the work, which is not part of the lexical semantics itself.

4.2 קקר in its paradigmatic relationships

The paradigmatic structure should provide us with further information for describing its meaning, indicating the relations and linguistic boundaries between the lexemes, even if the choice of gloss will always vary according to the context. Within the semantic field of knowledge there are three related lexical sub-groups. These have been described by Fox as faculties, activities and knowledge.⁵⁰ The *faculty* is the power to undertake various types of mental activity, existing prior to the activity and present without the activity itself. The *mental activity* is the thinking process during a specific time period. *Knowledge* is the communicable content or product of mental activity. These distinctions have been further refined by Sciumbata, who observes three dimensions, theoretical-speculative,

⁴⁷ Rinaldi 1959: 268–269.

⁴⁸ Zorell 1947–1954: 265.

⁴⁹ Cf. Jenni 1968: 226.

⁵⁰ Fox 1993: 149–169, esp. 151.

pragmatic-behavioural and methodological.⁵¹ The difference from Fox lies in her subdivision of the theoretical-speculative dimension, distinguishing between those characterised by 'information' (e.g. the noun רעִה) and those by 'faculty' (חִבּוּנָה). Fox, therefore, distinguishes by stages in the process, and Sciumbata by types of knowledge, which is further sub-divided by the three stages of Fox.

In both systems, of Fox and Sciumbata, the verb חָקַר would fall into a distinct category, respectively the mental activity or methodological dimension, in which knowledge is taken as an aim to reach.⁵² בִּין 'to understand' and הָבִין 'to get/have understanding' would at first seem to be a mental activity, but in fact it can be used either with a theoretical or pragmatic dimension, and is to be distinguished from חָקַר, which is an activity within the methodological dimension, knowledge being taken as an aim to reach. Possible synonyms within this dimension are indicated by collocations and parallelisms. The collocation with דָּרַשׁ in Deut. 13:15 could be categorized as a specific legal usage, but the parallelism of דָּרַשׁ with חָקַר at Sir 3:21 in an important passage, describing the proper activities of a wisdom student, indicates it should be considered further. דָּרַשׁ as a verb of inquiring is similar in sense to חָקַר, but it has an important difference in that its object can be God (e.g. Job 5:8).⁵³ In that sense it is less a verb of research than simple questioning, and in Job it never appears as part of the wisdom enterprise. It is the activity of God, or a questioning of God. Perhaps a closer synonym to חָקַר is בָּחַן, although once more this verb can have God as the object. It is also much more frequent than חָקַר in the religious sense of the process of testing someone's worth. Therefore, whilst there are semantic overlaps between these verbs they are not synonymous. That the object of the verb חָקַר is never God may well indicate that it is a form of investigating that treats its object in a manner that would not be possible of God.

⁵¹ 'חִבּוּנָה', in *The Semantics of Ancient Hebrew Database* (forthcoming); see in detail her thesis, 'Il campo lessicale dei sostantivi della 'conoscenza' in ebraico antico', PhD dissertation, University of Florence.

⁵² Fox only deals with nouns, and even then does not discuss חָקַר, so that one must judge for oneself where he would categorize the verb חָקַר.

⁵³ Wagner 1978: 301–302.

5. חקר *in its cultural context*

How, then, can the cultural context inform this semantic evidence for חקר? Certainly the limited knowledge we have only allows for tentative suggestions. The problems that we delineated at the beginning of this essay, arising from our lack of knowledge regarding many aspects of the book of Job, elicit all the more the caution regarding our descriptive semantics of such words. Driver, in commenting on Duhm's suggestion that חקר at Job 28:27 should have the unusual sense of 'to put to the proof', warns,

Such unusual and unsupported usages may be technical uses of the school of the wise men, and our insufficient knowledge of this language may account for the difficulty of seizing exactly and with certainty the meaning of the v[erb].⁵⁴

חקר does seem to be a verb that was used within the wisdom tradition, without being exclusively a sapiential term. Habel is perhaps right that the use of the verb by Eliphaz allows him to claim that his doctrines have been verified by techniques approved in the wisdom tradition, and that, therefore, it is proper for Job to accept his counsel as the valid word of one wise man to another.⁵⁵ The type of investigation, however, is not so clear. That the object cannot be God is perhaps explained by a theological stance that belief in God is accepted and not to be investigated or questioned in any degree. 'Fear of the Lord' is the necessary condition rather than research as we would understand it. It is not possible, as some seem to have done, to conclude from the verb חקר that knowledge within the sapiential tradition of ancient Israel is in some way deep or obscure. As the verb seems to denote in general a searching or evaluating, one must determine from the context more than the semantics how the knowledge is perceived. The comparative infrequency of the verb and the few synonyms in contrast to verbs for theoretical or pragmatic knowledge might also be explained by the acceptance of God-given wisdom, and the importance of revelation. The school tradition, reflected in inscriptions as involving writing and composing exercises, and in the Bible as study of texts, perhaps had little room for speculative research. The most elaborate

⁵⁴ Driver and Gray 1921 (part II): 198.

⁵⁵ Habel 1985: 137.

passage employing the verb חקר is Sirach 3, where any such activity is said to be disapproved of strongly.

It is not clear from Job 28 whether the activity of חקר is to be left to God or to be adopted by the pupils of wisdom. In 28:27 the last verb חקר marks the climax of a series of intellectual operations, and Dhorme suggests that by ending the gradation with this verb the activity is only complete once God has proclaimed wisdom.⁵⁶ God is here presented as being involved in the research exercise, although it may be complete by the time the wisdom student comes to study. Perhaps in 28:27 we have a series of activities, since it is the activity itself that is wisdom, and we do not need to impute a technical sense here. As the climax of the series of verbs, the searching would be the achieving of the wisdom tradition itself. The sapiential tradition placed a high regard on education, and such a eulogy of the activity could be seen in such a light.

For a passage such as Job 28 the contribution of the cultural context can only be extremely limited. The awareness of a school tradition is important for locating the activities in a wider context, but the internal evidence of the structure of the language probably provides greater information. That information, nevertheless, allows us to see better the operation of the verb חקר in its Israelite context before we impose our own theories of cognition upon it.

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⁵⁶ Dhorme 1967: 413.

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SEARCHING FOR AND EXPLORING WISDOM.
A COGNITIVE-SEMANTIC APPROACH
TO THE HEBREW VERB *ḥāqar* IN JOB 28

Pierre J.P. Van Hecke

Introduction

The twenty-eighth chapter of the book of Job is concerned with the quest for wisdom, i.e., with the question of how wisdom, as a specific form of cognition, can—or cannot—be reached. In the description of this quest, the Hebrew verb *ḥāqar* 'to search out, to explore' plays an important role: it occurs both in v. 3, in the description of human mining activity¹—which, according to many commentators, is “a paradigm for probing a mystery in the natural domain which parallels probing wisdom”²—, and as the last word of v. 27, which describes God's knowledge of wisdom. In this article, I will focus on the meaning of these occurrences of the verb, and on the effect of repeating the verb in the two contexts mentioned above. The meaning of these two instances of the verb will be presented against the background of a cognitively motivated account of the verb's overall semantic structure. To this end, I shall analyse the conceptual models which are organised lexically by the verb, in other words, I shall study the ways in which people conceptually understood the acts of 'searching' and 'exploring' referred to by the verb.

The verb ḥāqar in Classical Hebrew: A preliminary perspective

In order to understand the verb's meaning in the two instances of Job 28, and in order to appreciate the similarities and the differences between the two readings, it is necessary to take into account the verb's complete semantic structure. Since the introspection of native speakers obviously

¹ Like most commentators, I take humans to be the subject of v. 3, and not God himself. The latter option was chosen by the Targum and by Rashi, and is defended by E. Greenstein in his contribution to the present volume.

² Habel 1987: 396.

cannot provide us with any indications, we are limited to the approximately forty extant occurrences of the verb in the Classical Hebrew corpus.³ From these, it becomes clear that the verb has to do with searching. In spite of the Brown, Drivers and Briggs lexicon contending the contrary, the verb never means the searching for a particular object.⁴ The primary meaning of the verb always implies the searching or exploring of the object with the purpose of becoming acquainted with it. This is not to say, however, that the searching of this object never aims at finding a particular item in the area that is the object of the search. In some cases,

³ The exact number of occurrences is difficult to establish. DCH III, 304-305 provides the following figures: twenty-seven instances in the Hebrew Bible, eight in the extant Hebrew portions of Ben Sira, and eight in the non-biblical Dead Sea Scrolls. In the subsequent lexicographic treatment of the verb, however, reference is made to *nine* instances in the book of Ben Sira (3:21; 6:27; 11:7; 11:27; 13:11; 42:18; 43:28.30; 44:5). Concerning the instance in '11:27', a problem of nomenclature should be mentioned: in the textual edition of Ben Sira which DCH followed for its treatment (*The Book of Ben Sira. Text, Concordance and an Analysis of the Vocabulary* [The Historical Dictionary of the Hebrew Language], Jerusalem: The Academy of the Hebrew Language and the Shrine of the Book, 1973), the verse in question is numbered as 11:26, although in the accompanying concordance it is referred to as 11:27. In their commentary, Skehan and Di Lella (1987: 241) refer to the verse as 11:28, taking into account the fact that v. 26 is missing from the A-manuscript. However one may choose to number the verse, it should be remarked that the A-manuscript juxtaposes two forms of the verse: one that is in accordance with the Greek text and that should be read as "Call no one happy before his death, for by how he ends, a person is known", and one in which the verb *hāqar* is found, and which is translated by Skehan and Di Lella as "Before you examine a person do not call him blessed (or happy), for in his end a person is blessed (or happy)." (Skehan and Di Lella 1987: 236.241).

The instances of the verb in the non-biblical Dead Sea Scrolls are sometimes difficult to assess. DCH's reference to 1QM 16,13 (1QM 16,15 in García Martínez and Tigchelaar 2000: 138-139) does not seem justified, since the word is not transmitted in the manuscript, but is added in the emendation by Yadin [1962]. Other scholars provide a different emendation (see García Martínez and Tigchelaar 2000: 138). In 4Q298 1:4, it is impossible to determine whether a noun or a verb is intended, which is also the case in 4Q504 6:21, in spite of the most accepted, but uncertain reconstruction of the form as *nhqr* and in 1QH^a 5:5 (=fragm. 15a 5), which is interpreted as a noun by some and as a verb by others, depending on the reconstruction of the preceding words. (All references to Q texts according to García Martínez and Tigchelaar 2000).

⁴ BDB 350. The four instances the lexicon mentions do not provide sufficient proof for this meaning. In Prov 23:30, it is the tasting or testing of wine, rather than the searching for it that is meant, while Job 32:11c can best be understood as the probing of arguments (so Habel 1987: 441), rather than as the looking for fitting words. The two other instances in which the verb allegedly has the meaning 'to search for' do not have an explicit direct object, which makes it difficult to establish their exact meaning. Nonetheless, in Ezek 39:14, the verb designates the searching of the land, rather than the searching for corpses, although the latter element certainly is included, whereas, in Deut. 13:15, it is to be understood as 'searching out' or 'investigating', rather than as 'searching for something'.

the verb indeed means 'to search (an area) for (an object)'.⁵ In most cases, however, the verb designates the exploring or investigation of an object with the purpose of understanding it better. The literal use of the verb with this meaning is rather limited: in 2 Sam. 10:3 and 1 Chron. 19:3, it is used in the description of spies investigating and exploring a city, whereas, in Jer. 31:37, it refers to the exploring of the foundations of the earth, which, however impossible it may be, should be understood literally. The searching of the abyss by God described in Sir 42:18 can also reasonably be understood literally. Jer. 46:23 presents us with an interesting case in this regard: in this verse, the Egyptians are compared to a wood that cannot be searched because of its extent. Even though the sentence as a whole is a metaphorical comparison, the verb *hāqar* with the wood as its object can be understood literally.

Very often, however, the object of exploration or investigation is either an abstract thing⁶ or a person,⁷ the verb having a metaphorical meaning.⁸ In Prov 23:30, the verb also has a figurative meaning, in spite of the fact that its object is a material object, viz. 'mixed wine'. The verse does not refer to the searching for (the physical location of) wine, but rather to the tasting and assessing of wine.⁹ The verb, thus, takes the

⁵ This is the case in Jdg. 18:2 (searching the land for a good place for habitation); Ezek 39:14 (searching the land for corpses). A particular, metaphorical case is presented in 1 Sam. 20:12, where Jonathan tells David that he will search his father (the searched area) for his plans with David.

⁶ Deut. 13:15, similarly 11Q19 55:5.19 (cases of idolatry); 1 Kgs 7:47 and 2 Chron. 4:18 (weight of bronze); Ps 44:22 (faithfulness to God); Job 8:8 (research of the fathers); 13:9 (partiality); 29:16 (a juridical case); 32:11 (words); Prov 25:2 (mysteries); Eccl 12:9 (sayings); Lam 3:40 (ways); Sir 3:21 (what is beyond human understanding); 6:27 (wisdom); 44:5 (psalms); 4Q185 1-2 II:1 and 4Q392 1:4 (ways); 4Q301 1:2; 2:1 (the roots of wisdom/understanding); 4Q504 6:21 (God's great deeds). Object uncertain: 4Q378 11:7 (riches of the land?). Used absolutely: Sir 11:7, where the verb means 'doing research'.

⁷ Jer. 17:10 (the object 'heart and kidneys' metonymically stands for the inner man); Ps 139:1,23; Prov 18:17; 28:11; Sir 11:27; 13:11; 42:18. With God as object: Sir 43:28,30.

⁸ Calling these meanings 'metaphorical' might be considered unusual. Obviously, the use of the verb *hāqar* in the context of 'searching' for wisdom is not a novel poetic metaphor, and implies little figurativity, at least at first sight. The current cognitive-semantic approach to phenomenon of metaphor has convincingly demonstrated, however, that much of our ordinary thinking implies understanding one thing in terms of another (see Lakoff and Johnson 1980, and below). It has become current practice in cognitive semantics to call this way of thinking and speaking 'metaphorical', however conventional the language use in question may be. The reason is that the same cognitive operations underlie both the typical poetical metaphors and everyday expressions such as "he could not defend his position". It is in accordance with this cognitive-semantic usage that I shall use the word 'metaphor(ical)' here (see also Lakoff 1986).

⁹ See HAL 334: "W[ein] kosten".

meaning of investigating the quality or taste of wine, which are both abstract entities; the meaning should, therefore, be considered metaphorical.

In itself, the semantic structure of the verb *hāqar* does not present lexicographers with any particular problems. All lexicographic treatments agree that the verb's primary meaning is 'to search', 'to investigate', and they only differ in the way they divide and categorise the different cases of the verb. These divisions are usually made on the basis of the classes of objects with which the verb is syntagmatically connected, and are headed by a number of translational glosses indicating how the verb should be interpreted in connection with any of these particular classes. In the present treatment, I do not intend to provide another categorisation of the different instances of the verb. Rather, I aim at articulating a motivated account of the different cognitive models that find their lexical expression in the verb *hāqar*, and of the polysemy of the verb. I shall present an analysis, on the one hand, of the way in which the 'searching' described by the verb is conceptually understood, and, on the other hand, of the cognitive operations that account for the fact that the verb can have such different meanings as the 'spying' on a city (2 Sam. 10:3) and the 'searching' the roots of wisdom (4Q301 1:2). The latter might not strike us as particularly peculiar, since, in most languages, a similar polysemy can be observed. This does not mean, however, that this polysemy does not call for an explanation: searching a city and searching wisdom's roots are quite different things; we should be able, then, to provide an explanation that accounts for the fact that one single word can be used to describe both activities. The objective of the following paragraphs is to describe the way in which a verb for physical and visual exploration also designates cognitive research, and discuss the impact of this on the way in which the quest for understanding, as expressed by the verb *hāqar*, is conceptually understood. This description, in turn, will provide the necessary background for the analysis of the instances of the verb in the twenty-eighth chapter of Job.

Cognitive semantics: A brief introduction

My rationale for including an analysis of conceptual organisations and mental operations in a study of the semantic structure of a verb, as proposed in the preceding paragraph, lies in the basic conviction of the

cognitive-semantic approach which I shall be following here. Before turning to the analysis of the semantic structure of the verb *ḥāqar*, it is, therefore, necessary to sketch an overview of the field of cognitive semantics and its basic tenets.

The guiding assumption of cognitive semantics, and of cognitive linguistics more generally, is that human language cannot be properly understood without taking into account the way in which people think. In contrast to the structuralist approach to language, with its stress on language-internal paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations, the cognitive approach to linguistics explicitly studies language against the background of human cognition. In the field of lexical semantics, this means that cognitive linguistics will not study word meaning as a function of the semantic relations between different lexical items, but will, instead, study the nature of our concepts and the way this conceptual content is structured in the language.¹⁰ In the course of its development, cognitive semantics has focused on a number of different issues in which this relation between cognition and language plays a central role. At the risk of oversimplifying, I mention here two of these issues which will play a central role in the descriptive analysis of the verb *ḥāqar* in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, cognitive semantics posits that a lexical item can only be understood against the background knowledge of a complete cognitive domain.¹¹ In order to understand the word 'uncle', to take just one of the examples which Langacker uses in his standard cognitive grammar, one needs to possess and understand the quite complex domain of kinship relationships, in which the term 'uncle' designates a particular person with a particular kinship relationship to someone else.¹² Even though the term only designates one particular person, one needs to be acquainted with the whole domain in order to understand the meaning of the term. For that reason, cognitive semantics distinguishes between the 'profile' as the designated element and the 'base'¹³ that forms the cognitive "con-

¹⁰ See Talmy 2000: 3-4: "Thus, research on cognitive semantics is research on conceptual content and its organization in language and, hence, on the nature of conceptual content and organization in general."

¹¹ Langacker 1989: 147-166.

¹² Langacker 1989: 184-185.

¹³ This cognitive 'base' needed for the understanding of the semantic meaning of a term can be very extended, as it contains all the background knowledge and all the experiences connected to the designated concept. For that reason, cognitive semantics avoids the classical distinction between semantic features that would make up the lexical meaning of

text necessary for the characterisation of the profile".¹⁴ This cognitive 'base' needed for the understanding of the semantic meaning of a term can be very extended, as it contains all the background knowledge and all the experiences connected to the designated concept. It is important to note that not only particular elements of a domain can stand in profile. Verbs and other relational terms typically put a relationship between elements into profile. The verbal expression *to give birth*, for example, which is connected with the same domain of kinship relationships, designates a relationship between two elements in this domain, rather than a single element. Because relational predications only make sense in conjunction with their nominal complements, the related elements are also considered to be part of such a relational profile.¹⁵ The most salient of these elements is called the 'trajector' of the relation, while the others are referred to as 'landmarks' in Langacker's cognitive grammar. One of his examples makes the difference clear. The sentence, 'there's a mailbox across the street', designates a spatial relationship ('being across') between a number of elements. The most prominent of these is referred to here as 'a mailbox', which is the trajector of the relation, and, in this case, also the syntactical subject of the verb. Two other elements play a role in the relation profile, however. On the one hand, there is the 'street' and, on the other, there is the position of the speaker without which the predication 'across' would not make any sense. These two elements, the 'street' and the location of the speaker, function as landmarks in the relational profile under discussion.¹⁶

A second issue that has received ample attention in recent cognitive-semantic research is the semantic structure of lexical items, i.e., the way in which different meanings or interpretations of a single term are mutually related. Research items include the polysemy of words, their ambigu-

a term and encyclopaedic knowledge about the referent of that term, which does not affect the meaning of the term. In the cognitive view, both kinds of knowledge determine the meaning of a term—although not all to the same extent—so that a strict distinction between them is out of place (see Langacker 1989: 154-166; Geeraerts, Grondelaers and Bakema 1994: 47).

¹⁴ Langacker 1989: 118.

¹⁵ Langacker 1989: 215 describes this as the conceptual dependence of relational predications: "Relations are conceptually dependent, i.e. they cannot conceptualize interconnections without also conceptualizing the entities they interconnect." This observation, which is extremely important for the analysis of the semantic structure of valence relations, is elaborated in further detail in Langacker 1989:298-310.

¹⁶ For this example, see Langacker 1989: 217-218.

ity, and/or denotative vagueness.¹⁷ The attention given to these phenomena is not purely linguistic; cognitive semantics tries to provide a cognitively motivated account of the co-existence of different meanings in a single term. For that reason, cognitive semantics not only examines the actual, synchronic semantic structure of lexical items, but also the mental mechanisms that account diachronically for the multiple senses that many terms have.¹⁸ Two of these mechanisms have received ample attention in cognitive semantics, i.e. metaphor, and, more recently, also metonymy.¹⁹ Lakoff and some of his colleagues have convincingly shown that metaphor and metonymy are not only linguistic phenomena, but that our cognition operates to a large extent in a metaphorical and metonymical way.²⁰ In structuring our perceptions of the world, we very often make use of existing concepts that, in our eyes, either show some similarity to the perception in question, or are contiguously related to it. In most cultures, for example, life is conceptualised as a road. When structuring our perception of life as a road, we think metaphorically, making use of one domain (TRAVELLING) in order to gain insight into another, unconnected domain (LIVING). If, on the other hand, we, for example, conceptualise an object as the material of which it is typically made (e.g., a glass, a cork, irons), our thinking proceeds metonymically, making use of one concept to structure another concept to which it is conceptually contiguous, since they belong to the same conceptual domain.²¹ It is by virtue of these conceptual mechanisms that metaphor and metonymy also become mechanisms of lexical change by which words obtain new senses (e.g., 'departed' for 'dead'; 'cork' for 'plug for a bottle').

¹⁷ For a recent discussion of these characteristics of semantic structure, see Dunbar 2001: 1-14.

¹⁸ For a thorough exposition of diachronic lexical change, see Geeraerts 1997.

¹⁹ On the renewed interest in metonymy, see Barcelona 2000; Dirven and Pörrings 2002.

²⁰ Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff and Turner 1989.

²¹ In cognitive semantics, metaphor and metonymy are often distinguished on the basis of the number of domains involved in the conceptualisation: metaphor consists of a conceptualised crossing of domain-borders (e.g., the concepts LIFE and ROAD do not belong to the same domain), whereas metonymy operates within one domain (e.g., it is not hard to figure a domain to which both the material GLASS and the recipient GLASS belong). It should be remarked, however, that it is often very difficult to determine whether two concepts belong to the same domain/group of domains or not, as Feyaerts (1999) has correctly observed. The author, therefore, proposes to define metonymy primarily as a conceptualized contiguity relationship between two entities, without giving too much weight to the number of domains involved.

A research into searching

In the following, I wish to apply these cognitive-semantic insights to the lexical structure of the Hebrew verb *hāqar*. Since this verb is used to refer to both physical and visual searching, and the mental exploration of abstract concepts and people, I shall, first, make some general observations on the conceptual domain(s) of 'searching' and on the way these domains are used in the context of the quest for understanding and insight. In the next paragraph, I shall turn to the description of the verb *hāqar* itself, paying particular attention to its meaning of 'mentally exploring'.

In cognitive-semantic studies and publications, the way in which thinking, understanding, and other mental faculties are conceptualised has received quite some attention.²² At the centre of this is the question of how people think about thinking, in other words, the question of to which (folk) models human beings resort in order to understand the functioning of their own cognition.

One of the central observations concerning the way in which people think about thinking is the observation that most concepts of thinking are metaphorical or metonymical in origin.²³ Even though most languages do have terms whose (etymologically) primary sense is related to the domain of cognition (e.g., Eng. *know* and *think*), most of the terminology we use when speaking about our mental activities and states either have their origin in a different domain, or have developed a new sense that is contiguously related to earlier senses. In spite of the fact that languages vary considerably in the way their lexicons are organised (and hence in the way they structure reality), some basic metaphorical conceptualisations of our cognitive faculties are extant in a large number of languages. Since these conceptualisations seem to be so cross-culturally valid, it is justi-

²² The most thorough treatments can be found in D'Andrade 1987, Sweetser 1990: 23-48 (Chapter 2: *Semantic structure and semantic change: English perception-verbs in an Indo-European context*), and, most recently, in Fortescue 2001. The cognitive-semantic attention for the conceptualisations of cognitive faculties is also evident from the space these metaphorical conceptualisations occupy in Lakoff's on-line Master Metaphor List (<http://cogsci.berkeley.edu>), while John Barnden's on-line ATT-Meta Project Databank consists solely of what he calls 'Metaphors of Mind' (<http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/~jab/ATT-Meta/Databank>; see also Lee and Barnden 2001). Most of these studies focus on English and Indo-European examples, with the notable exception of the eskimologist Fortescue 2001, who included data from no less than 73 languages in his survey.

²³ Fortescue 2001, especially 32-38.

fied to suppose there is a universal framework of how people understand their own cognition, which also underlies the Classical Hebrew concepts.

One conceptualisation, which is so pervasive that it mostly goes unnoticed, structures ideas or insights as entities,²⁴ often as physical objects that can be localised in a spatial environment. It is by virtue of this basic conceptualisation that we think of ideas as things one can find, grasp, give, receive, and much more, as becomes clear in the following examples.

- (1) *She gave me some good ideas, but I haven't done anything with them as yet.*
- (2) *I found this idea in one of his books.*

From this, it follows that our cognitive activities, which involve dealing with ideas, are also often conceptualised as perceptually interacting with external objects.²⁵ Typically, understanding is regarded as mentally seeing or grasping, although other perceptual faculties are sometimes used as the source of metaphorical conceptualisations of mental activities (see Examples 3 and 4).²⁶

- (3) *I can't see her point.*
- (4) *This is difficult to grasp.*

In the same vein, the more stative mental operation of knowing, is often conceptualised as having seen or as feeling or touching, which are the result of having grasped.²⁷

Since the conceptualisations mentioned above are described in detail in the cognitive-semantic literature, I shall not dwell on them. Rather, I will turn to one aspect of cognition that has only been touched in passing in the literature, and which is of particular interest in the description of

²⁴ Compare with Lakoff and Johnson's treatment of what they call 'Entity and Substance Metaphors' (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 25-29).

²⁵ See the category 'Cognizing as Physically Sensing' from the ATT-Meta Project Databank.

²⁶ Fortescue 2001: 20-23. In many languages, the common term for 'understanding' involves a conceptualisation of this kind; compare the Italian *capire*, the French *comprendre*, the Dutch *begrijpen*, and the Modern Hebrew *tāfas*.

²⁷ Fortescue (2001: 23-24) points to the Greek *oida-*, and to the German *wissen*, which are related to, e.g., the Latin *videre* 'to see'. The Italian *sapere* and the French *savoir* are examples of the conceptualisation of knowing as feeling.

the verb *hāqar*, i.e. the conceptualisation of the *quest* for understanding and knowledge. As beings capable of reflecting, people can be aware of the limits of their knowledge and can strive to extend their understanding to things they do not know yet. Below, I give a limited description of some conceptualisations of this quest. To this end, I shall combine the insights into the conceptualisations of mental states and activities described above with some introspective thoughts on this quest.²⁸

In the light of what has been said above, it will come as no surprise that many of the conceptualisations of the quest for knowledge presuppose the basic metaphorical structuring of ideas or bits of knowledge as locally confined entities which one can perceive or seize. Since understanding is typically viewed as seeing or grasping, the incomprehensible or the unknown is likewise understood as being out of sight or out of reach, as becomes clear from Examples 5 and 6.

(5) *His motives remain obscure to me.*

(6) *My plans are still up in the air.*

The quest for knowledge will, consequently, be structured metaphorically as attempts to gain physical or perceptual access to an object, or, put more simply, as searching.²⁹ Before turning to this metaphorical structuring and its realisation in the Hebrew lexicon, it is necessary to gain some insight into the structure of the domain of searching itself. Three abstract elements are essential for the understanding of searching: 1) a subject performing a search, 2) a space that is searched, and 3) an object which the subject hopes to find while performing the search. The act of searching implies a relationship between these three elements, and it is this relationship which stands out as the *profile* of a verb like ‘to search’. In this relational profile, the different elements do not all have the same

²⁸ The falling back on introspection may appear a serious methodological drawback in my current presentation. Since, as Talmy (2000: 4-6) has observed, cognitive semantics deals with the content and structure of consciousness, and introspection is the only way of accessing this content and structure, it stands to reason that the method of introspection be used in the present context. Of course, “introspection must be employed with rigor” (*op.cit.*: 5). I intend to achieve this rigor by founding my analysis on the existing cognitive research into the conceptualisation of thinking, and by juxtaposing the models arrived at by introspection with the semantic evidence of the Hebrew verb *hāqar*.

²⁹ Besides the conceptualisation as searching which is described here, the quest for knowledge is also often conceptualised as the removing of the obstacle that hinders the sight of an object. Compare the English *discover*, *detect* (from the Latin *detegere*), and the Hebrew *gillāh*.

salience, and the salience is, moreover, dependent on the specific relationship a verb or verbal expression designates. Two cases can be distinguished. In the first, the subject has a very specific idea of the object he is looking for, as in Example 7.

(7) *He looked for his wallet.*

In this case, the subject functions as the trajector of the relational profile, while the object constitutes the primary landmark, the searched area being a secondary, but obligatory landmark.³⁰ This relationship, which I label with the English verbal construction *to search for*, can be sketched as in Figure 1.

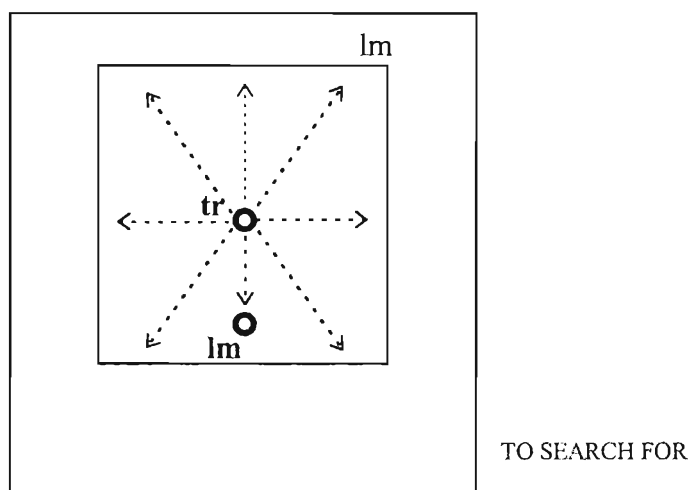


Figure 1.

The second case is one in which the subject searches a certain area, not precisely knowing in advance what he or she can expect to find. Example 8 is a case in point.

(8) *The police searched several houses.*

³⁰ Since searching prototypically involves physical moving around of the trajector, it should come as no surprise that, in some languages, the sense 'to search' is derived from the primary sense 'to move around'. The Italian *cercare*, the French *chercher*, and the English *search* all derive from the Latin *circare* 'to walk around'; compare also the Hebrew *tur* (for the verbs mentioned here, see Palache 1959: 76).

While the trajector of this relation is the same as in the preceding, the primary landmark has switched from the intended object to the searched area, as becomes clear in Figure 2.

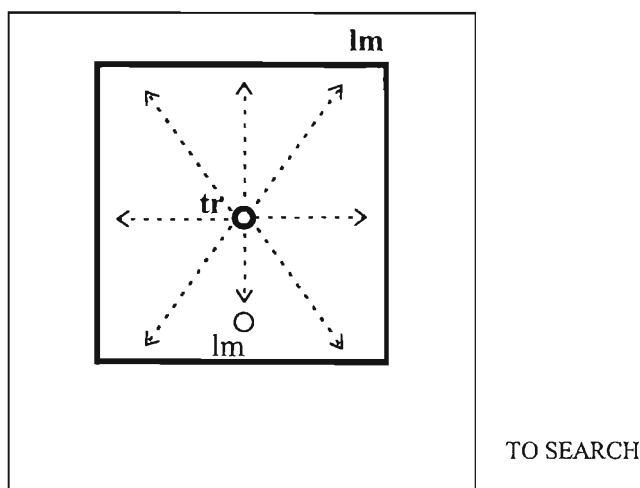


Figure 2.

These two relational profiles are very often used in metaphorically conceptualising the quest for understanding and knowledge. Insight is regarded, then, as an object one can look for within a certain area in which one expects to find this object, as is clear from Examples 9 and 10.³¹

(9) *I looked in his books for a solution to my question.*

(10) *She searched her mind for a good reason to do it.*

Very often, the searched area is not only viewed as a two-dimensional space, but as three-dimensional solid matter in which the required object is hidden. From this, it follows that searching for knowledge is conceptualised as digging through solid matter in order to reach the object of one's inquiry. This elaboration of the searching domain is in keeping with the observations on the conceptualisations of mental activities made above. Since what is unknown is regarded as out of reach or out of sight, everything that hinders the access to or the sight of an object will be seen as a difficulty in the course of gaining understanding. Moreover, since it is harder to penetrate resistant, solid matter than it is to walk around on a surface, and since what is enclosed in a solid environment is, likewise,

³¹ It is interesting to note that the area in which one hopes to find ideas can be located either outside the subject (see Example 9), or within the subject's own mind (see Example 10).

harder to grasp and to see than what lies at the surface, 'digging' for knowledge will be understood as requiring more effort than simply looking for it. The most prominent and prototypical mass of solid matter we are confronted with is that of the earth on which we live. For that reason, penetrating solid matter will prototypically have a downward orientation. Consequently, what lies deeper, also requires more effort to reach. This aspect of physical searching is transferred metaphorically to our understanding of the search of insight and knowledge: the deeper we dig mentally, the more thorough and the better our analysis will be, whereas a search that remains at the surface is considered to be of inferior value, as is exemplified in Examples 11 and 12.³²

(11) *a superficial treatment*

(12) *an in-depth analysis*

The quest is not finished with digging through the surrounding three-dimensional matter and reaching the intended object of the search. The object must consequently also be separated from its surroundings, and brought to the surface and to the light in order to be fully possessed and seen. Transferred to our understanding of the quest for knowledge, an analogous way of thinking can be observed: in certain instances, researching is conceptualised as loosening the context and extracting the correct insight, as becomes clear from the etymology of the English word *analysis* (Greek *analuō* 'to loosen up'). On the other hand, the gaining of insight is also frequently understood as bringing to light or as revealing, as in Examples 13 and 14.

(13) *Her research has revealed some new facts.*

(14) *The exposition of his theory*

So far, I have dealt with the conceptualisation of the quest for insight as the searching for an object in a certain area. This conceptualisation was based on the metaphorical structuring of ideas or parts of knowledge as locatable objects. This structuring is not the only one possible, however. In many cases, ideas are viewed as having a certain content themselves, and hence as occupying a particular space. It is by virtue of this concep-

³² Compare also the German and the Dutch *gründlich/grondig, diepgravend onderzoek*. See also Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 100-105, who extensively deal with the notion of depth in relation to the metaphorical structuring of arguments.

tualisation that we can speak of *rich ideas* and *encompassing thoughts*.³³ If ideas are conceptualised in this fashion, the quest for knowledge will also be structured in a different way to the ones described above. Gaining insight will no longer be viewed as (metaphorically) locating and gaining access to an object, but rather as the exploration of the inner content of a space. The relation that is the source for such a metaphorical conceptualisation differs from the two relations TO SEARCH FOR and TO SEARCH, that were described earlier. The basic difference lies in the fact that, in the relational predicate TO EXPLORE, as I like to call it, the goal of the exploration is not so much the finding of objects in the searched area, but rather the gathering of knowledge on the explored area itself. Figure 3 illustrates the structure of this cognitive domain.

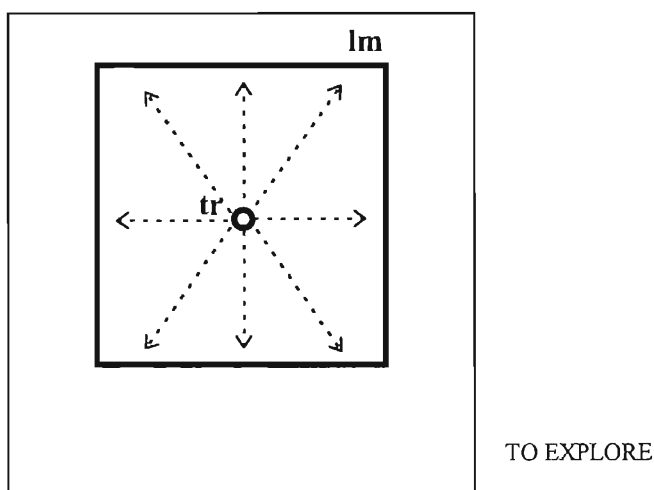


Figure 3.

In spite of the clear similarities with the relations sketched above (notably that of TO SEARCH), one important difference is clear: the relation TO EXPLORE only implies one profiled landmark, i.e. that of the explored area.³⁴ The remarks made above concerning the dimensions of the searched regions also apply here, however. The searched area can be a two-dimensional or a three-dimensional space, something that is also transferred to the quest for insight: ideas are often conceptualised as

³³ Note that the English adjective *complex* attests to the same conceptualisation, as it is derived from the Latin *complecti* 'to encompass, to embrace'.

³⁴ It should be noted here that the distinction between the different models is not as clear-cut as presented here. One can easily think of circumstances in which the exploring of an area directly or indirectly results in the discovery of certain elements in that area. The models presented here function as heuristic tools, while, in reality, the transition from one model to another should be thought of as continuous rather than as discrete.

three-dimensional masses, in which one needs to penetrate in order to fully understand them,³⁵ and, in the case of ideas, depth stands for richness.

Continuing our phenomenological search for the meaning of 'exploring',³⁶ it should be remarked that exploring typically consists of two different, though closely related activities. On the one hand, exploring implies determining the content of a searched area, but, on the other hand, it also implies determining the extent or the expanse of the searched area. It is only by ascertaining the outer borders of an area that one can be sure of having explored the full extent of the area and being acquainted with its full content. As we will see, in some cases, this is of great importance in understanding the metaphorical conceptualisation of the quest for insight, as already becomes clear in Examples 15 and 16.

(15) *That theory contains no secrets for her anymore.*

(16) *We only now see the full extent of the problem.*

In conclusion, two models of the quest for insight have been explored, one that understands this quest as gaining access to a locatable object in a circumscribed space, another that regards this quest as the exploration of the inner content and the extent of a three-dimensional space. These models are not consistent with each other, but rather complement each other in that they both focus on a different aspect of the quest for knowledge.

The verb ḥāqar in Classical Hebrew: A cognitive-semantic perspective

Equipped with the methodological instruments and the phenomenological observation on searching, we may now return to the verb *ḥāqar* in an attempt to provide a cognitively motivated account of the polysemy the verb exhibits. As mentioned above, the verb is used in such different

³⁵ As in the sentence 'I have thoroughly explored his idea of lexical change'.

³⁶ Talmy (2000: 5) has suggested that cognitive semantics is indeed a form of phenomenological research: "[...] cognitive semantics centers its research on conceptual organization, hence, on content experienced in consciousness. That is, for cognitive semantics, the main object of study itself is qualitative mental phenomena as they exist in awareness. Cognitive semantics is thus a branch of phenomenology, specifically, the phenomenology of conceptual content and its structure in language."

contexts as the determining of the weight of vessels, the probing of man's inner disposition, and the searching of the roots of knowledge. Rather than presenting these different uses side by side, a cognitive exposition aims at accounting for the mechanisms that cause this polysemy.

I mentioned above that the verb *hāqar* never means looking for or searching for an object, but that it always designates the searching of or the exploring of an object in order to gain understanding of it. That is to say that the core meaning of the verb can be schematised as in Figures 2 and 3, but not as in Figure 1. An important distinction that should be made in the different readings of the verb is the one between its literal and figurative uses. In a number of cases, the verb designates the literal searching of a physical area, while, in most cases, the (mental) exploring of abstract concepts is intended. A further question should be considered in regard to this distinction, i.e., the question of the diachronic or genetic relationship between these two groups of meanings. On the one hand, one could view the literal-figurative distinction in this case as the coincidental result of the application of the more or less abstract meaning 'to investigate' to both abstract and concrete contexts.³⁷ On the other hand, one could view the figurative meaning as logically dependent on the literal one, and regard our understanding of mental searching as based on our knowledge of physical searching. From the investigations of the previous paragraph, it will be clear that I opt for the latter possibility. The metaphorical structuring of mental activities and states on the basis of physical interactions and states is so pervasive³⁸ that it is cognitively likely that the verb *hāqar* followed a similar development, even though this development cannot be traced diachronically in the extant corpus.³⁹ Therefore, it is reasonable to take the literal uses of the verb as our starting-point.

³⁷ I am grateful to Prof. T. Muraoka for an enlightening discussion on this subject.

³⁸ This development is a good example of a general principle of metaphor, i.e., that metaphor makes use of the more familiar or readily understandable (often the concrete) in order to gain insight into our more abstract experiences.

³⁹ The etymology of the verb has become the subject of an interesting discussion, that cannot be settled on the basis of the Classical Hebrew corpus alone. Because of similar developments in the roots *bqr* and *hpr*, and of the Arabic cognate verb *haqira* 'to be low', Palache 1959:1 6.34 attributes a meaning 'be low, deep' to the root. This would explain the root's nominal forms, which sometimes (Ps 95:4; Job 11:7; 38:16) seem to take the meaning of 'lowest part, bottom'. In TWAT III:157-158, Tsevat argues, however, that the basic meaning of the verb is 'to divide', much like that of the Aramaic *bdq*. For our present purposes, the verb's etymology is not of prime importance, while the question whether the three nominal instances of the root mentioned above should be explained on the basis of the root's distant etymology or on the basis of a metonymical development (depth < object of exploring), as most lexicons do, cannot be treated here.

I mentioned above that the act of exploring typically involves the determining of both the content and the extent of an area. To my mind, these two aspects also play a role in the meaning of the verb *hāqar*. In most literal instances of the verb, both aspects play a role, albeit with shifting emphasis on one of them. In 2 Sam. 10:3 and 1 Chron. 19:3 (spying of a city), the emphasis is on the determining of the content of the explored 'area'. In Jer. 31:37 (fathoming the foundations of the earth) and Jer. 46:23 (searching of a wood), however, it is not so much the exploring of the content, but rather, and very explicitly, the determining of the expanse of the area that is most important. When God is said to search the abyss in Sir 42:18, he is, reasonably, interested in both fathoming its depths and determining its content, as the parallel with the searching of the human heart seems to indicate. In two literal instances, the verb does not simply designate the searching of an area, but, more specifically, the searching of an area with the goal of finding a specific object. The aspect of determining the content of an area, which is always present in the core meaning of the verb, is highlighted in these cases. In Jdg. 18:2 (searching the land for habitation) and Ezek 39:14 (searching the land for corpses), the verb, thus, has a meaning that can be regarded as the specification of one of the aspects of the core meaning of 'exploring'. One final meaning development, that will be of particular importance in the description of many metaphorical instances of the verb, should be noted here. In Jer. 46:23, the Egyptians are said to be like a wood that cannot be explored (*nehqar* - *niph'al*). As I have mentioned above, it is the determining of the area's extent that is put into profile here, but there is more to the verb's meaning. What is said to be impossible in this verse is not so much the fact of performing a search on the wood, but, rather, determining the wood's extent, and, hence, knowing it to its full extent.

In most instances, the verb is used to designate the searching of an abstract concept or a person. In these cases, the knowledge of what it is to perform a physical search or exploration is used in order to gain insight into the abstract field of mental researching. In general, the same meaning aspects and semantic developments that were described above, are also applicable in the case of metaphorical uses of the verb. Mental searching is concerned with the determining of both the extent and the content of the explored 'area'. In many cases, no specific emphasis is laid upon any of these aspects, and mental exploration is straightforwardly conceptualised as a physical exploration without further specification. Metaphors typically only map those aspects from one domain to another

which serve a specific purpose in the context, while other aspects can easily be left out of the figurative comparison without affecting the efficacy of the metaphor. In a number of instances, however, one of the aspects of exploring is put into profile in the metaphorical description. In 1 Sam. 20:12, King Saul is conceptualised as an area or a container filled with ideas and plans, which Jonathan will search in the hope of finding out what he intends to do to David. In this metaphor, it is the specific meaning of 'searching an area for an object' that has been mapped onto the domain of mental inquiry. In other cases, the verb has its core meaning of 'exploring an area', albeit metaphorically. The aspect of determining the content of that area is prominent in instances like Job 29:16 (examining a case before court), Job 32:11 (probing words in a discussion), Prov 23:30 (testing wine), and Sir 3:21; 6:27 (inquiring into wisdom). The cases in which man is said to be tested by God or by a fellow human being also fall in this category (see n.7). In two related instances, viz., 1 Kgs 7:49 and 2 Chron. 4:18, the emphasis is completely on the determining of the extent of an (innumerable) number, so much so that it should be regarded as one more specifying derivative meaning of the verb.

As was the case with the literal instances of the verb, the verb's figurative uses also sometimes take the meaning of 'knowing to its full extent'. Often, this meaning occurs with a negation in order to designate the fundamentally unfathomable nature of the verb's object (or subject in the case of the passive *niph'al*). As mentioned before, it is not so much the possibility of exploring the object that is negated, but rather the possibility of fathoming and exploring it to its full extent, and, hence, of fully knowing it. This meaning can be regarded as metonymically derived from the verb's core meaning of 'exploring': in this metonymy, the word for the cause ('exploring') is also used for the effect ('knowing it to its full extent'), a very frequent metonymical development. The verb *hāqar* has this meaning in 1 Kgs 7:47 and 2 Chron. 4:18, but also in Sir 43:28,30, in which the impossibility of fathoming God is expressed. The context of these verses (Sir 43:27-33) make clear that the verbal expressions do not designate the impossibility of investigating God's nature or his works. The verses, rather, stress the fact that God is always more than humans can know. The same meaning should also be ascribed to the frequent nominal expression *'ēn/lō' hēqer*,⁴⁰ which points not so much to the impossibility of searching, but to the impossibility of exploring or

⁴⁰ Is 40:28; Job 5:9; 9:10; 34:24; 36:26; Prov 25:3; Ps 145:3. See also 1QH^a 11:20; 14:3.

knowing to its full extent.⁴¹ In conclusion, I bring together my observations on the semantic structure of the verb *ḥāqar* in a single scheme (Figure 4).

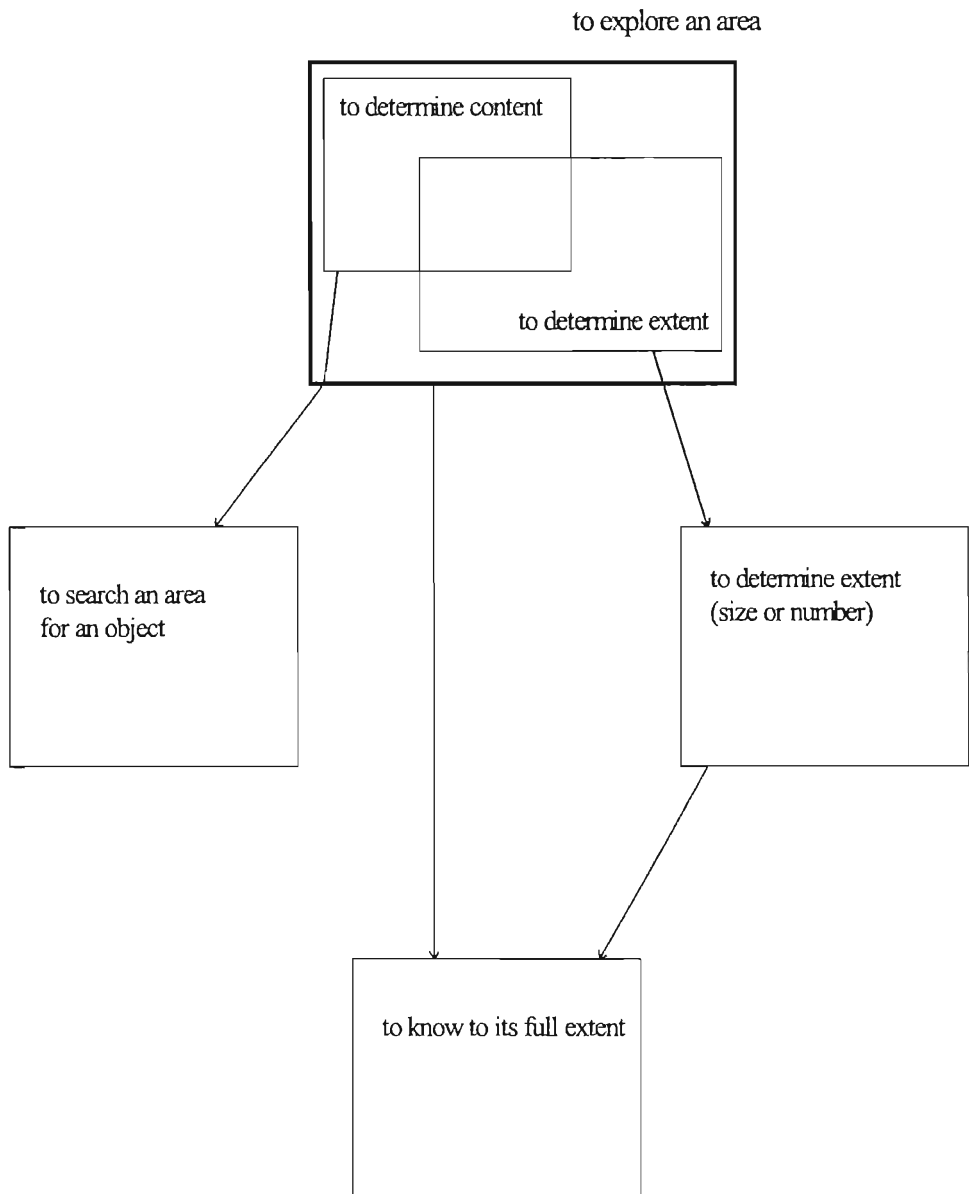


Figure 4.

⁴¹ See also TWAT III:159-160 (Tsevat).

The verb ḥāqar in Job 28

Turning to Job 28,⁴² we may now ask what is the meaning of the two occurrences of the verb in vv. 3 and 27, and what is the semantic effect of this repetition. By its position at the beginning and at the end of the chapter, and by its use in a literal as well as in a metaphorical context, this verb is, without doubt, one of the key terms of the chapter and of its central metaphor. Nevertheless, the two instances of the verse exhibit some notable mutual differences. In Job 28:3, the verb designates human exploration of the soil. It is clear that, in this verse, the verb has its literal meaning of physically exploring a three-dimensional space. Both the complement *l'ēkōl taklūt* 'to the farthest limit' and the parallel expression *qēs sām*, which Habel correctly translates as 'to establish the extremity', indicate that this exploration implies the investigating of the expanse of the searched area. The rhetorical question of v. 12 makes clear that however thorough man's exploration of the earth's extent and content may be, he is unable to find, i.e., to locate, wisdom. Wisdom is, thus, implicitly conceptualised as the (unattainable) object of a search.⁴³ The rest of the chapter elaborates on this inaccessibility of wisdom. The place of wisdom is unknown in the land of the living (v.13b), in the abyss (v.14a) and in the sea (v.14b). To all living beings (v. 21a), even to the birds in the sky, who are renowned for their excellent eyesight (v. 21b), wisdom remains hidden (i.e., out of sight). Even Death and the nether world, located at the deepest confines of creation, have merely heard about Wisdom (v. 22b). Only God, in his act of creating, has discovered the location of wisdom.⁴⁴ God does more than only locating wisdom, how-

⁴² Much of what is said about the quest for wisdom in the twenty-eighth chapter of the book of Job, draws on the conceptual metaphorical models described above. This happens in a very explicit way in the first eleven verses of the chapter, in which human digging for precious metals and gems is, at first, presented as the apogee of human skill. V. 12, with its question as to where wisdom can be found and where the place of understanding is, presents a quite unexpected break in this description and provides us with a hermeneutical key with which the preceding verses ought to be read (compare Kamp, this volume): in spite of all man's digging and searching of the earth, which is a remarkable human feat, he is unable to locate wisdom and understanding. By this juxtaposition of verses, the digging of the earth is implicitly presented as a metaphorical model with which the searching for wisdom can be understood.

⁴³ See Van Oorschot 1994: 187: "Die 'dinglich' vorgestellte Größe bleibt für den sonst in alle Tiefen vordringenden Menschen unauffindbar."

⁴⁴ I endorse Van Oorschot's position that God is not depicted as the creator of wisdom here. God's acquaintance with wisdom and his creation took place simultaneously: "Die Aussagenreihe [in vv.25-27, PVH] parallelisiert Gottes schöpferisches Tun (vv.25f.) und

ever. To God, wisdom is not only an entity he can observe (*rā'āh*), but he also explores the inner space of wisdom itself, as the verb *hāqar* in V. 27 indicates. In the latter verse, the verb has the metonymically derived resultative meaning of 'knowing something to its full extent', 'knowing it to its full depth'. A similar meaning is conveyed by the parallel verb *sippēr*, which, in the present context, should be interpreted as 'counting'.⁴⁵ Often, when the root *hqr* has resultative meaning, it is paralleled to the root *spr* (see e.g. Jer. 46:23; Job 5:9; 9:10). This should come as no surprise: in order to count something, one needs to know it to its full extent. In this way, the verb *sippēr* contributes to the general sense of the verse "that God perfectly fathomed the nature of wisdom".⁴⁶ This parallel between *sippēr* and *hāqar* impairs Habel's proposal to read V. 27 as a chiasm,⁴⁷ and raises the question of whether the other two verbs of the verse, viz. *rā'āh* and *hēkīn*, stand in parallel. This is not an easy question to answer, since the meaning and even the text-critical originality of the latter verb are highly debated items in Joban exegesis. Some commentators⁴⁸ follow a number of manuscripts that read the verb *hēbīn* 'to understand' where the majority of the manuscripts read *hēkīn*. Of course, this reading would provide a perfect parallel for *rā'āh* 'to see' in the first colon,⁴⁹ but the scarcity of the text-critical witnesses of this reading and the fact that the Septuagint follows the majority reading speak against the originality of the reading *hēbīn*. Most commentators, therefore, choose to go by the majority reading, i.e., *hēkīn*, although they differ to some extent in their interpretation of the verb's meaning. In his commentary, Hartley proposes the translation "he discerned it", which fits the context very well, and provides an excellent parallel to the 'seeing' of the first colon. It is not clear, however, how this translation can be derived from the verb's meaning of 'arranging, setting in order' which Hartley adduced as evidence in support of his interpretation.⁵⁰

sein Verhalten gegenüber der Weisheit (v.27) als zeitgleiche Vorgänge." Pace Pope 1973: 206: "In the process of creation, God gave wisdom a searching and thorough trial."

⁴⁵ See BDB 708; HAL 723; Dhorme 1926:378: "Dieu voit la sagesse et le nombre, il en suppute la valeur."; Pope 1973: 206; Hartley 1988: 381 n.3.

⁴⁶ Rowley 1976: 185.

⁴⁷ Habel 1987: 400. Habel considers *hāqar* to be parallel with the verse's first verb, viz. *rā'āh*. This seems less likely: 'seeing' is a perceptive activity, while 'exploring' involves an active mental operation.

⁴⁸ E.g. Dhorme 1926: 378; Pope 1973: 206.

⁴⁹ Dhorme 1926: 378: "en parfaite harmonie avec les autres verbes."

⁵⁰ Hartley 1988: 381. In his n.4, Hartley argues that there is no reason to emend the verb to *hēbīn*, but in his translation, he seems to have followed this emendation all the same.

I suggest reading the verb as ‘determining’ or ‘observing’ here. God’s activity is seen, then, as determining where wisdom actually has its locus or as observing it in its locus. The Hebrew verb *hēkīn* also has the meaning of ‘establishing/determining (a position)’ in the two senses this expression also has in English.⁵¹ On the one hand, the verb sometimes designates the determining decision that a certain place should serve a certain purpose,⁵² and, on the other hand, in some cases, the verb indicates the determining of the qualities or the position of an object.⁵³ I would read the verb in the latter sense here: God determines or establishes wisdom(’s location). This proposal is in agreement with Habel’s interpretation of the verb, but, whereas the Australian commentator took this verb to indicate that God established wisdom “as the pivotal principle of his creation”,⁵⁴ I suggest that it is simply wisdom’s existence and location that is established and determined by God. The two cola of the verse, thus, exhibit a parallel structure:

- 27a. Then he saw it and counted it
 27b. determined it and even probed it

In both cola, God moves from the simple external observation and local determination of wisdom to the internal and fundamental probing of it. The contrast with humans’ inability to obtain wisdom is clear, and becomes even more poignant through the repetition of the verb *hāqar* in the chapter: while men explore (*hāqar*) the whole earth without ever locating wisdom, God can not only locate wisdom, but can also measure wisdom’s inner extent and explore (*hāqar*) it to the full. The verb, thus, is central to the chapter’s argumentative development about the quest for wisdom.

⁵¹ Compare ‘determine how something should be’ and ‘determine how something is’.

⁵² In Ex. 23:20; 1 Chron. 15:1.3.12; 2 Chron. 1:4; 3:1 (HAL: “bestimmen, festsetzen”)

⁵³ See Deut. 19:3 (determine a road’s distance) and 1 Sam. 23:22 (determine someone’s hiding place). Note that, in the latter verse, the verb is paralleled by the verbs *yāda* ‘to know’ and *rā’āh* ‘to see’.

⁵⁴ Habel 1987: 400.

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CATEGORIES AND CONCEPTS

John R. Taylor

1. *Categorization*

All living creatures, even the most lowly, possess the ability to categorize. In order to survive, a creature has to be able, at the very least, to distinguish what is edible from what is inedible, what is harmful from what is not harmful. And in order to mate and reproduce, a creature must be able to recognize its own kind.

Humans excel at categorizing. Our ability to function in the physical and social world depends on elaborate categorizations of things, processes, persons, and social relations. We are able to create and operate with literally tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of categories, ranging from the extremely fine-grained to the highly general. Moreover, categorization is flexible, in that we can modify existing categories in order to accommodate new experiences, and we can create new categories whenever the need arises.

Categorization serves to reduce the complexity of the environment. As Rosch put it, “The task of cognitive systems is to provide maximum information with the least cognitive effort” (Rosch 1978: 28). Strictly speaking, every entity and every situation that we encounter is uniquely different from every other. In order to function in the world, we need to be able to group different entities together as instances of the same kind. Our cognitive apparatus does this for us automatically, most of the time. We ‘automatically’ classify things around us as ‘books’, ‘pencils’, ‘cats’, ‘coffee-cups’, and so on. And having classified something as a ‘book’, ‘coffee cup’, or whatever, we have access to further knowledge about the object—we know how to handle it, what we are supposed to do with it, and so on. And if we come across something whose categorization is not immediately evident, the experience tends to create a feeling of unease. ‘Well, what *is* it?’, we ask. We also feel uneasy when we encounter an unknown word. ‘What does it mean?’, we ask, wanting to know what category of things, events, processes, or whatever, can be designated by the word.

As a linguist, I am interested in categorization for two reasons:

(i) First, as already suggested, the meaning of a word can be taken to be the name of a category. To know the word *tree* is to know, amongst other things, what counts as a tree. In virtue of knowing the word, we are able to apply it correctly to anything that can be categorized as a tree (in contrast, say, to a bush or a shrub). To a large extent, the study of lexical semantics *is* the study of categorization.

(ii) Second, language itself is an object of categorization. Like everything else in our environment, every linguistic utterance is a unique event. That language is able to be used as a means of communication at all rests on our ability to recognize, in the flux of language events, instances of linguistic categories. Acoustically different sounds get categorized as instances of the same phoneme, sound-meaning relations get categorized as instances of the same word, diverse linguistic expressions get categorized as examples of the same lexical or syntactic category, such as 'noun', 'verb', 'transitive clause'.

How we categorize the physical world around us does not materially affect the world. A lump of gold, or a brain cell, remains the same, irrespective of what we call it. Our categorization may, to be sure, have a bearing on how we interact with an entity, and may reflect the current state of scientific knowledge, but the entity itself is unaffected by our categorization of it. In categorizing the physical world we are dealing with what John Searle (1969) referred to as 'brute facts'. Brute facts are facts about the world which are true independently of human intervention. Searle contrasted brute facts with 'institutional facts'. Institutional facts are creations of human cognition and are underlain, as Searle (1969: 52) put it, by conventions of the form "X counts as Y in context Z". In a sense, then, institutional facts are constituted by our categorization of them. Institutional facts comprise, most obviously, legal, ethical, political, and economic concepts. Language is also a socially constituted institution. A particular sound counts as an instance of phoneme *p* in language *l*, not because of the brute acoustic facts, but in virtue of the socially construed system which is language *l*.

The distinction between brute and institutional facts might be queried (though I will not pursue this topic here). For example, some might want to claim, that since the natural sciences themselves are a socio-political

institution, the very recognition of 'brute facts' is itself an institutional fact. Others might want to argue that the categorization of subjective, internal states, such as emotions and feelings, are products of socialization, and therefore also constitute a socially constructed reality. Perhaps, in the last analysis, all facts might be 'institutional facts', creations of our categorization of them.

2. Approaches to categorization

Intuitively, it seems reasonable to claim that things belong to a category on the basis of their sharing of properties. The sharing of properties, or 'features', is the basis of so-called 'classical categories':

1. A **classical category** is defined by a conjunction of necessary and sufficient features. Each feature is *necessary* for membership in the category; together, the features are *sufficient* for category membership. Suppose category C is defined by the conjunction of features $f_1 \dots f_n$. Every member of the category has to exhibit each of the features $f_1 \dots f_n$. Any entity that exhibits the features $f_1 \dots f_n$ ipso facto is a member of C . An entity which fails to exhibit the full set of features $f_1 \dots f_n$ is not a member of C . As a consequence, an entity either is or is not a member of the category, and all members of a category have equal status as category members.

As we shall see below, there are some major problems associated with classical categories. A much discussed alternative is categorization by prototype:

2. A **prototype category** is structured around a good example. Things are assimilated to the category to the extent that they resemble, in some way(s), the prototype. Since different things may resemble the prototype in different ways, the members of a category need not share a set of common features. To be sure, some features may turn out to be necessary (though not, in themselves, sufficient). Mostly, features will 'expected', 'likely', 'possible but improbable', and so on. The expected properties will be exhibited by the prototype, but membership in the category does not require possession of all of the expected properties. As a consequence, prototype categories have internal gra-

ded structure, with some members being more central, more typical, than others. The prototypical bird, for example is quite small, it flies, sings, and builds its nest in trees. Sparrows and starlings conform quite well to the prototype, and are therefore more central members of the bird category than ducks and chickens, which in turn are more central than penguins and ostriches.

3. *Classical categories*

Classical categorization has a venerable history in Western thought and is therefore not to be dismissed lightly. It is based on the Aristotelian 'law of the excluded middle', according to which an entity either exhibits a certain property or it does not, it is either a member of a category or it is not. The point is stressed by one of the founders of modern logic, Gottlob Frege:

The law of the excluded middle is really just another form of the requirement that the concept [i.e. category: JRT] should have a sharp boundary. Any object Δ that you choose to take either falls under the concept Φ or does not fall under it; *tertium non datur*. (Frege 1980 [1892]: 139, cited in Aarts, in press)

The benefits for cognition of classical categories will be evident. If you learn that entity e belongs to category C , you can be confident that e will exhibit the defining features of C , namely $f_1 \dots f_n$. Learning one fact about e —namely, that it is a member of C —gives you immediate access to a number of other facts about e , namely, that e exhibits features $f_1 \dots f_n$. Rosch's principle of cognitive economy would seem to be amply satisfied. Prototype categories do not afford this degree of confidence. The fact that e is a bird does not guarantee the inference that e can fly. Being able to fly is an expected, not an essential property of birds.

Nevertheless, there are some fundamental problems associated with classical categories, which I discuss below.

3.1 *Epistemological problems*

How do we come to know that entity e belongs to category C ? If category membership is defined by a conjunction of features $f_1 \dots f_n$, the only way to know with certainty is to check the entity for each of the features $f_1 \dots f_n$. But, then, knowledge that e belongs to C actually brings no benefits at all. We cannot predict any further properties of e , which e will have in virtue of its belonging to C , since each of these properties has already have been checked off.

The epistemological problems can be illustrated with reference to syllogisms. The syllogism is a mode of argumentation that guarantees the truth of a conclusion given the truth of the premises. The following well-known example illustrates:

- (a) All men are mortal.
- (b) Socrates is a man.
- (c) Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

Schematically, the example takes the following form:

- (a') All members of category C exhibit feature f .
- (b') e is a member of C .
- (c') Therefore, e exhibits feature f .

The truth of (c') is certainly guaranteed by the truth of (a') and (b'). But it would be wrong to construe the syllogism as a means for arriving at a new and previously unknown truth on the basis of already known truths.

How do we know that (b') is true, i.e. that e is a member of C ? On the classical theory, we know this because we have checked off the features of e against the list of features that define C and discovered that e exhibits each of the defining features. But since, by (a'), all members of C exhibit feature f , f is one of the necessary features of C . The conclusion (c') tells us nothing in addition to what we need to know in order to ascertain the truth of (b'). Far from being a procedure for acquiring a new truth, a syllogism is a tautology.

There are two ways in which the epistemological objection could be softened in order that classical categories can be truly informative, or at least, informative to a degree.

(i) First, we might assign e to C , not because we have checked off each of the defining features of C , but because someone tells us that e is a C . If the information is reliable, we then do indeed have access to a range of further facts about e . In our daily lives, we often do defer to the experts for the categorization of an entity. Whenever we buy a packaged article in the supermarket, we expect the article to have been properly categorized by the label on the package and to exhibit the appropriate range of properties.

(ii) However, in order to ascertain conclusively that e belongs to C it will be necessary to check off all the defining features of C . Sometimes, though, it may be possible to cut a few corners, so to speak. It could be the case that the features that define a category are strongly correlated, such that feature f_1 tends to co-occur with feature f_2 . If an entity exhibits f_1 , chances are that it will exhibit f_2 , and vice versa. Alternatively, or contemporaneously, some feature, or set of features, may to all intents and purposes be unique to C . Observation of just one of these features, or set of features, will be sufficient to warrant the categorization of e and to enable fairly reliable predictions to be made about further properties of e .

In cases like these we may speak of a feature's **cue validity**. A feature f has high cue validity with respect to category C to the extent that the presence of f alone is a reliable (though not necessarily infallible) pointer to membership in C . If you observe that a creature is covered with feathers, you can infer with a high degree of certainty that the creature is a bird, and that it will exhibit other bird-like properties, for example, that it builds nests and has a beak. (You may be wrong, of course; you may be looking at Papageno.) If you observe that an entity eats, breathes, defecates, and (eventually) dies, you may not infer that it is a bird. These properties (eating, breathing, etc.), although necessary, and no doubt correlated, are not unique to the category 'bird' and have low cue validity with respect to the category.

The question arises, whether the features that define the categories that we operate with are *in fact* typically correlated, and whether certain features *in fact* have high cue validity with respect to a given category. The answer to both questions has to be 'yes'. The categories that humans construct—the categories that we find useful and which, to cite Rosch again, "provide maximum information with the least cognitive effort"—are categories with just these properties. Having feathers, having a beak,

and laying eggs are features which are highly correlated and each is strongly diagnostic of the 'bird' category. Or, to take a linguistic example, being able to take a past tense inflection and present tense 3rd person singular -s inflection are highly correlated (in English), and each points to categorization as a verb. We can, to be sure, imagine categories which do not exhibit feature correlation and whose features, taken singly, have low cue validity. These categories would be virtually useless to us in our encounters with the world. Imagine a category defined in terms of the features 'blue in colour', 'weighing between 5 and 28 kilograms', and 'manufactured in 1950'. The features do not correlate, each of the features has low cue validity with respect to the category, and the category does not permit any inferences to be drawn about further properties (whether expected, improbable, etc.) of its members.¹ Unless the properties of different entities tend to correlate, or are expected to correlate, there would be no reason to create the category in the first place. Thus, there would be no reason for a phonologist to recognize a category defined in terms of the features 'having two syllables', 'containing [b]', and 'not containing [l]'. Current phonological theory does not predict that the presence of [b] will correlate in any interesting way with number of syllables or non-occurrence of [l].

In summary: Categories are not constituted by an *ad hoc* assembly of features. The usefulness, and, hence, the very existence of a category is based in a theory (Murphy and Medin, 1985). The theory may be an 'expert' theory of a given domain, it may be constituted by prevailing institutional norms, it may be a 'folk' theory of how the world works, or it may be little more than a vague and difficult-to-formulate intuition that occurrences in the world conform to a previously observed pattern. Whatever its nature, it is the theory which underlies the cue validity of a feature vis-à-vis a category, and the correlation of features within a category.

¹ Similar remarks can be made of the kinds of categories that psychologists used to use, and probably still use, in category attainment experiments, such as a category that comprises everything that is either a square or a circle and that is not green.

3.2 *Conceptual problems*

In order to determine whether an entity belongs to category C we need to ascertain whether the entity exhibits the defining features $f_1 \dots f_n$ of C . Notice, however, that each of the features $f_1 \dots f_n$, taken singly, also defines a category. There is a category defined in terms of feature f_1 , there is the category which consists of entities exhibiting f_2 , and so on, up to f_n .

Suppose we say that 'having feathers' is a feature of 'bird'. For the feature to be usable, we need to know what a 'feather' is, what it means to 'have feathers', and how we ascertain whether an entity does indeed 'have feathers'. We shall need a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for the category 'feather' (as opposed, say, to the categories 'scale', 'hair', or 'fur'). If 'having feathers' is a classical category, we shall need to list the necessary and sufficient conditions for membership in that category. Having done that, we shall need to state the necessary and sufficient conditions for each of those features, and so on. We are faced with an infinite regress.

We might avoid the infinite regress if we were able to refer to a set of 'primitive' features which are not themselves defined in terms of other features, and from which all possible categories are built up. Primitive features, presumably, will be innate and universal, available to all humans. Many semanticists have indeed assumed an inventory of primitive features and have incorporated these into their analyses. Candidates for the status have included {HUMAN}, {MALE}, {ANIMATE}, as well as such concepts as {THING}, {GOAL}, {DO}, and {CAUSE}. An early proposal was that of Katz and Fodor (1963). Semantic primitives have also played an important role in Jackendoff's semantic theory (Jackendoff 1990). Perhaps the most systematic attempt in recent times to reduce concepts to a set of semantic primitives has been Wierzbicka's programme to define words in terms of the 60 or so items of her Natural Semantic Metalanguage (Wierzbicka 1996).

Several observations are pertinent:

(i) It is significant that those linguists who have made extensive use of primitives, such as Jackendoff, readily admit that the primitives rarely make up the totality of a word's meaning. While {ANIMATE} and {NON-HUMAN} might feature in the meaning of *goose*, what makes a goose a goose, and enables us to distinguish a goose from a duck, cannot be

expressed by means of primitive features. One cannot reasonably propose {LONG NECK} as a primitive semantic feature (Jackendoff 1990: 32-3).

(ii) One might wonder whether some of the proposed features really are conceptually primitive. Take the feature {CAUSE}. Far from being a primitive notion, causation is a complex and differentiated concept (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: Ch.14), which emerges in our interactions with the world, and which is based in theories of how and why events happen.² Notions of {MALE} and {FEMALE}, {ANIMATE} and {INANIMATE} are not conceptually simple, either, being based in complex theories of life, gender, and sexuality. Even 'basic domains' (Langacker 1987), such as temperature, colour, and weight, though no doubt phenomenologically irreducible, are understood against a rich conceptual background. Temperature, for example, is not just a matter of a sensory response, our conceptualization of temperature is structured by its role in our conceptualization of other domains, such as the climate, the cycle of the seasons, our clothing and habitats, our emotional states, our interpersonal relationships, and so on.

(iii) Conceptual reduction requires that the defining concepts be simpler than the categories that they define. To define the bird-concept in terms of 'having feathers' implies that one cannot have the bird-concept unless one has already attained the feather-concept, the latter being a defining feature of the former. But this is surely wrong. It is not the case that the bird-concept rests on the attainment of less complex concepts, such as 'having feathers'. Rather, the notion of 'having feathers' is understood against our knowledge of birds. Our knowledge of birds is the domain against which 'having feathers' is understood.

(iv) For many concepts, it may be questioned whether they can in principle be fully explicated in terms of other concepts. Consider Cruse's (2000: 37) discussion of 'knife'. Cruse suggests the definition: 'an instrument with a blade and handle used for cutting'. Although it looks reasonable enough, it will be apparent that the definition fails to distinguish

² I am not denying the usefulness of 'cause' as an element that can feature in semantic characterizations. There is undoubtedly a causal component in the meanings of many words (especially verbs) and constructions. But rather than take 'cause' to be a semantic primitive, I would prefer to regard it as a dimension of similarity across different kinds of events.

knives from axes, saws, and chisels. It is not so much that the definition lacks a differentiating feature. Rather, as Cruse points out, the 'blade' in question has to be 'knife-type blade', the handle a 'knife-type handle', and the cutting it is used for has to be 'cutting knife-wise'. The very circularity of these proposals is significant—it suggests that we can only understand what a knife is on the basis of real-world knowledge of knives, what they look like, what parts they consist of, and of the various 'practices' that they are used in.

What this all means, I suggest, is that we apprehend and learn categories (at least, many of them) holistically, in the context of domain-based knowledge, of our theories about the world, and of practices for interacting with the world. We do not understand categories by breaking them down into their components, neither do we 'build up', or 'assemble' categories out of their defining features, or from the concepts contained in definitions.

3.3 *Where are the classical categories?*

A final problem with classical categories is that they are actually quite hard to come by (at least, in 'non-expert' discourse—see below). Examples that are sometimes cited are kinship terms and terms which characterize animals for sex and maturity ('sheep', 'ewe', 'ram', 'lamb', etc.). Another old favorite is 'bachelor', defined in terms of the features {+HUMAN}, {+ADULT}, (+MALE), {+NEVER MARRIED}. One aspect of this definition, is that adulthood and marital status are culturally constructed concepts par excellence. It is not surprising, therefore, that the application of the word *bachelor* to, for example, Catholic priests, Tarzan, and men in stable homosexual or non-marital heterosexual relationships, fails to give the clear-cut results predicted by the classical theory.

The classical categories that we do encounter usually have a special status; they are what we might call 'expert categories'. Experts of various kinds—scientists, bureaucrats, lawyers, and academics in every field of enquiry (including linguistics)—may explicitly define categories in classical terms. Take the concept 'adult'. For bureaucratic purposes, an adult may be defined as a person who has reached their 18th birthday. Thus defined, 'adult' constitutes a classical category. It has a clear-cut boundary and lacks internal structure—for bureaucratic purposes, all adults are

adults to an equal degree. In everyday usage, however, the word *adult*—and the distinction between ‘adult’ and ‘non-adult’—is likely to be much more fluid and understood in terms of several equally fluid properties. Age will certainly be an important, though not necessarily decisive factor. Notions of emotional and physical maturity, independence from parents, and the ability to assume civic responsibilities, may all contribute to the decision to call a young person an adult, or not yet an adult. Needless to say, the non-classical status of ‘adult’ will be inherited by concepts whose definitions make reference to the feature, such as ‘bachelor’.

4. *Prototypes*

Especially in view of the manifold problems associated with classical categories, increasing numbers of linguists over the past couple of decades have embraced the notion of the prototype category. The approach was supported by robust experimental demonstrations of prototype effects (Rosch 1978). For example: (i) people are able to offer consistent judgements on the centrality of an entity (e.g. an apple, or an olive) in a category (e.g. fruit); (ii) when asked to list members of a category, people tend to name more prototypical members first; (iii) statements pertaining to more central members (‘an apple is/is not a fruit’) are assessed in terms of their true/false status more rapidly than statements pertaining to less central members (‘an olive is/is not a fruit’); (iv) prototypes display a ‘perceptual magnet effect’, in that the distance from a prototype to an outlier is perceived to be smaller than the distance from an outlier to the prototype; and (v) when reasoning about a category, people often appeal to the specific properties of its more prototypical members, ignoring the properties of less central members.

In her later work in particular, Rosch insisted on the need to distinguish between prototype effects as such and the cognitive representation of categories. Obviously, category representations need to be such that prototype effects can be accounted for, but the effects themselves should not be identified with the representation. I will not, here, examine the different approaches to cognitive representation. Instead, I highlight three sets of problems that arise, especially in connection with a ‘naïve’ view of prototype categories.

4.1 *Category boundaries*

Although prototype categories are supposedly structured around a prototype, it is clearly insufficient to characterize a category simply in terms of its prototype. One cannot characterize 'bird' in terms of a robin and things which are similar to a robin, and leave it at that. One needs to know how far outwards from the prototype the category can extend. Ostriches and kiwis count as birds (albeit not very representative ones), but bats and butterflies do not. The outward extension from a prototype is something that language users have to learn. To judge from children's errors of over- and under-extension (Barrett 1995), it is not an easy task.

For some categories—colours are an obvious example—the outer limits appear to be set by neighbouring categories. A colour ceases to be red as its hue approaches the prototype of orange or purple; a cup ceases to be a cup as its dimensions approach those of a vase or a bowl (Labov 1973); anger ceases to be anger as it attenuates into mild irritation. In such cases, the boundaries of the categories may be fuzzy, and borderline cases may have ambiguous status vis-à-vis the competing categories. Especially problematic, however, is the fact that degree of representativity is not always indicative of fuzzy boundaries. While ostriches may be untypical birds, they are nevertheless birds, not birds to a certain degree, while bats, in spite of their obvious similarity to the bird prototype, are not birds at all. Although the 'bird' category displays prototype effects, the category does in fact have a clear boundary.

4.2 *Polysemy*

A category name can be polysemous, that is, a word is associated, not with a single (prototype) category, but with a cluster of distinct (though related) categories. When we speak of a person as a 'jail-bird', or as a 'rare bird', we are not referring to some marginal exemplars of the avian category, we are using *bird* in a new sense. In fact, the category 'jail-bird' is itself likely to have prototypical instances, quite independent of the structure of the avian category.

A major problem, now, is that in many cases it may be difficult to determine just how many different meanings a word has, and, therefore, to classify a particular usage as an exemplar of one or another category (Geeraerts 1993). To give a concrete example: Do *close the door* and

close the office exemplify one and the same sense of *close*, and, if so, is one example perhaps a more prototypical example of closing than the other? Or are we dealing with two different, though obviously related senses of the word?³ And if we opt for the polysemy analysis, which of the two senses is exemplified in *close your mouth*?

The widespread existence of polysemy would be consistent with the claim that language users simply learn, for each word, a large (perhaps, a very large) inventory of accepted uses. One might further hypothesize that speakers are on the whole rather conservative in their language habits, extending learned uses only minimally, in order to accommodate new experiences as they arise. A prototype would then emerge on the back of learned instances. A number of possibilities suggest themselves. The prototype could be constituted by a particularly frequent cluster of very similar instances, it could be a culturally or environmentally salient instance, it could be constituted by a kind of statistical average of the instances, it could be that instance, or instance cluster, to which the others can be most economically related, or the instance cluster which exhibits the most features with the highest cue validity.

4.3 *Compositionality, or: The problem of the pet fish*

The prototypical pet would be a domestic dog or cat, with ferrets, snakes, and parrots being more marginal examples of creatures that people keep as pets. We can also imagine a prototypical fish, a herring, for example. We understand 'pet fish', however, not in terms of the pet or the fish prototypes. It would make even less sense to claim that the prototypical pet fish (a goldfish, for example) represents the intersection of prototypical fish and prototypical pets. A prototypical pet fish is not a prototypical fish which happens to be a pet, nor a prototypical pet which happens to be a fish. Compositionality—the combination of concepts to produce a more complex concept—appears to proceed without reference at all to prototypes. It seems to be based, in fact, in classical-like categories, that is, categories which lack an internal structure, and which are amenable to definitions in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions! The complex

³ The point here, is that in *close the door*, the direct object of the verb designates a device which is maneuvered so as to prevent access to an enclosed area, whereas in *close the office*, the direct object designates the enclosed area to which access is prevented. The two uses are related by metonymy. See Taylor (1995: 125).

category 'pet fish', then, emerges as the intersection of the (classical) categories of 'pet' and 'fish' (Fodor 1998: Ch. 5). Against this, it has to be recognized that complex categories, in general, acquire properties that are additional to, or even at variance with, the properties contributed by the constituent parts (Langacker 1987: 279-82; Taylor, *in press*). It is not surprising, therefore, that the prototype structure of a complex concept is not based on the prototype structure of the component concepts.

More generally, as Fodor has observed, as a concept gets specified in ever greater detail, prototype effects tend to become increasingly less relevant. You might have a conception of a prototypical grandmother—a kindly, frail old lady with grey hair, let us say. But any information you have about *your* grandmother can override the prototype. It is as if the prototype serves as the default expectation, which kicks in to enrich the concept, whenever specific information is lacking.

5. The context-dependence of meanings and categories

Regrettably, both 'expert' and 'folk' theories of semantics, as enshrined, for example, in the practice of lexicography and in people's deference to 'the dictionary', tend to promote the idea of word meanings as fixed, determinate, free-floating and context-free entities which speakers commandeer in their construction (and listeners in their comprehension) of texts and messages. However, a general theme to emerge from the above discussion is the context-dependence of concepts and categories, and, hence of word meanings. Pulling together the strands of our discussion, we can distinguish the following (interrelated) aspects of context:

(a) First, there is the context supplied by our familiarity with the world, by our embodiment in the world, and by our knowledge of various 'practices' for interacting with the world. I have already mentioned the case of 'knife'. Consider a related concept, that of 'cutting'. We understand the verb (*to*) *cut*, not, I think, in terms of an abstract, context-free definition (however one may wish to formulate it), but in terms of a cluster of practices which are named by the verb: *cut the grass*, *cut the cake*, *cut one's finger nails*, *cut one's finger* (cf. Searle 1980). And if we encounter an expression which cannot easily be associated with a known practice (such as *cut the moon*), we have difficulty grasping what the expression is supposed to mean. To put the matter more picturesquely: Suppose we

humans had a different mode of existence—suppose we were gelatinous, sea-dwelling, jelly-fish-like creatures. I doubt whether we would ever be able to attain the concept of cutting anything, let alone what it meant to ‘cut the grass’.

(b) Second, our understanding of a concept is based in more general conceptual knowledge, that is, in ‘theories’. Categories are coherent, precisely because of an underlying theory. Significant, in this respect, is the fact that very often, things are brought together in a category, not only, or not primarily, on the basis of superficial perceptual similarities, such as overall size, shape, or colour, but in virtue of similarity of structure, function, or purpose, that is, in virtue of the role that an entity plays in larger conceptual schemas. In a sense, then, the study of word meanings shades into the study of conceptual systems (Langacker 1987). Any given word provides access to a rich network of conceptual knowledge; specific uses of a word shine a spotlight, as it were, on portions of the conceptual network.

(c) Finally, I think it is important to emphasize the role of linguistic context, that is, of language-internal relations, both paradigmatic relations of contrast, antinomy, hyponymy, etc., and syntagmatic relations, pertaining to collocations and co-occurrence restrictions. It may well be the case that in the early years of life, language acquisition needs to be ‘bootstrapped’ by relations between language and the world, as when a child learns the meanings of words by ostension. (But even learning by ostension requires a ‘theory’, for example, a belief in object permanency.) However, a good deal of our expertise in a language is acquired through encounters with language itself. If it is true, as Violi (1997) has argued, that words evoke the typical contexts of their use, the contexts have to do, not only with the extra-linguistic situation and with conceptual theories, but also with language-internal relations. And in the study of older forms of a language, or of a dead language, the language internal evidence is pretty much all there is to go on.

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CONTEXT, COGNITION, AND SEMANTICS: A UNIFIED DYNAMIC APPROACH

Ronald W. Langacker

1. *Preliminaries*

1.1 *Global issues*

When I was trained in linguistics, a comprehensive view of linguistic semantics was easy to articulate (Katz and Fodor 1963).¹ Semantic structure had the fortunate properties of being **static**, **bounded**, **discrete**, and **determinate**. The linguistic system (or internalized grammar) was acquired instantaneously by idealized speakers in a completely homogeneous speech community. This system of linguistic ‘competence’ was discretely bounded from everything else: context, general knowledge, the rest of cognition, and even its own implementation in ‘performance’. Within language, semantics was a separate ‘component’—semantic rules were distinct from syntactic rules, and the semantic representations of lexical items distinct from their syntactic representations. The lexicon consisted of a fixed inventory of lexical items, each with a certain number of senses. Moreover, each sense was completely defined by a bundle of discrete semantic features (or ‘markers’). The meaning of a sentence, also a bundle of semantic features, was computed by semantic rules in a fully determinate way from the meanings of its lexical items on the basis of its syntactic structure.

Language has apparently changed a lot in the last 40 years. To be sure, many linguists would still argue that linguistic semantics has some or all of the above properties. Yet most cognitive linguists see them as being imposed on language as theoretical preconceptions, instead of being inherent in the actual phenomenon. It will not do, however, merely to

¹ It was suggested that I discuss “the intimate relationship between linguistic structures and discourse”, focusing on “semantic processing in relation to cognitive embeddedness”. I will do so by sketching a comprehensive and unified view of semantics and linguistic meaning. This view is presupposed in my own framework of Cognitive Grammar (Langacker 1987a, 1990, 1991, 1999a) and more widely in cognitive linguistics.

negate these properties, saying that linguistic semantics is **dynamic**, **unbounded**, **continuous**, and **indeterminate**. While a case can certainly be made for each of these characterizations, they cannot be accepted without qualification. Pushing them to the extreme and accepting them in wholly unqualified fashion would imply the absence of any discernible organization or describable structure. There would be no distinction between semantics and everything else, nor any regularities to uncover and characterize. Everything would dissolve into a vast, amorphous, homogeneous mush.

The trick is to capture what is right about each view while avoiding their excesses. A viable, empirically responsible cognitive semantics is much more difficult to articulate than either extreme and does not lend itself to summary in a 4-word slogan. Even the following formulation merely hints at the subtle complexities involved: semantic structure is dynamic with local stability; while it is limited, imposing any specific boundary would be arbitrary; it has both discreteness and continuity; and its indeterminacy does not imply the absence of structure and regularity.

My own view of cognitive semantics has a number of more specific properties. The following points should gradually emerge during the course of the presentation, based on specific examples: (i) Meaning resides in conceptualization (any aspect of mental experience). (ii) The time-course of conceptualization—how it develops through processing time—is an important dimension of linguistic meaning. (iii) Conceptualization includes the apprehension of textual, contextual, and interactive factors, which are integral facets of linguistic semantics. (iv) An expression's meaning is not 'in' its words, but emerges through mental construction that draws upon all available resources. (v) There is a gradation—rather than a specific boundary—between 'semantics' and 'pragmatics' (more generally, between 'linguistic' and 'extralinguistic' structures). Let me start with some general comments about the final point.

Linguistic theorists generally try to maintain a clear boundary between what is 'linguistic' and what is 'pragmatic' or 'extralinguistic', as shown in Figure 1(a). So far as I can tell, this represents an apriori methodological preference. My own observation of language suggests a gradation between the indisputably linguistic and the indisputably non-linguistic, as in Figure 1(b). Recognizing a gradation does not imply that language has no limits, that there is never a stopping point short of describing all of cognition. If we want to reify linguistic behavior and ability, and talk

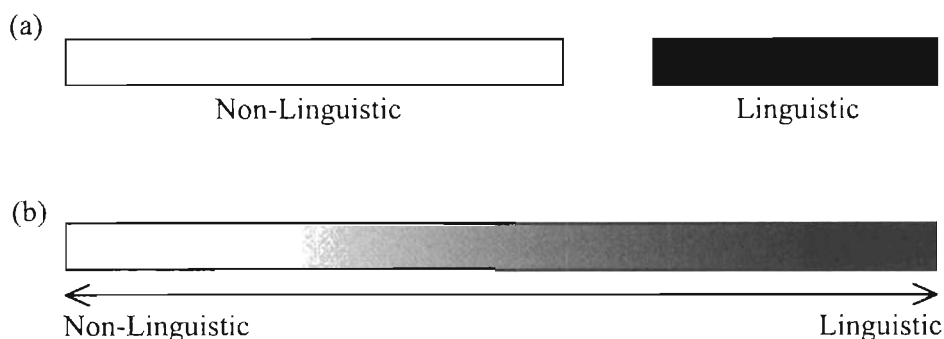


Figure 1.

about a 'language' or 'linguistic system', two factors allow a non-arbitrary delimitation: structures employed in speaking and understanding a language are part of the language (included in the linguistic system) to the extent that they are psychologically **entrenched** (with the status of **units**, i.e. automatized cognitive routines) and **conventional** within a speech community. Hence the delimitation has both a cognitive dimension and a social dimension, but does not prejudge what kinds of structures will be included. Note that both factors are inherently matters of degree, implying a gradation rather than a precise, specific boundary.

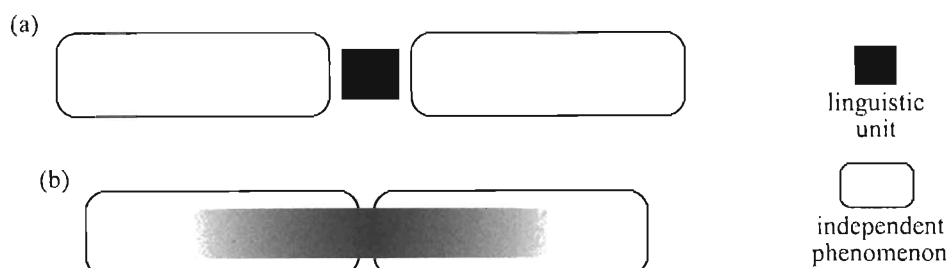


Figure 2.

Making the same point from another perspective, we can observe that the units constituting a language are not distinct and independent from other facets of cognition, as represented in Figure 2(a). Instead, as sketched abstractly in Figure 2(b), 'linguistic' structures presuppose, recruit, or incorporate a wide, open-ended array of knowledge, abilities, and processing capacities, and thus cannot be characterized autonomously, in isolation from other cognitive phenomena. Even if they achieve some special cognitive status, and are not strictly reducible to independent phenomena, they nonetheless emerge from and draw upon such phenomena and would not exist without them.

1.2 *Conceptualizers and the scope of conception*

My primary example will be sentence (1):

(1) *The cat is on the mat.*

While this is hardly a typical instance of natural language use, one can nevertheless imagine a fairly plausible context. Suppose my wife and I are concerned with the comfort of our cat, so we buy a nice mat for it to sleep on. Naturally, the cat will have nothing to do with the mat. But when we come home one evening, and I glance in the living room, I see that the cat has finally curled up and gone to sleep on the mat. I might proudly announce this to my wife by uttering (1). This scenario supports a use of (1) that might be considered canonical.

What must we posit in a complete account of the structure and meaning of this sentence? I suggest that traditionally recognized linguistic units tell only part of the story. Such units include the component lexical items, their syntactic arrangement, their specifically 'linguistic' meanings, and the strictly compositional semantic value derivable from them. I will be exploring some of the other factors involved and the issue of their linguistic status.

Most obviously, the sentence is produced by a **speaker** (S) and addressed to a **hearer** (H). The interlocutors, together with the immediate circumstances (like the time and place of speaking), constitute what I call the **ground** (G). Minimally, then, we must posit the elements shown in Figure 3(a). (Observe that dashed arrows represent mental relationships of any kind.)

Physically—through sound, gesture, or writing—the speaker produces the sentence and the hearer perceives it. Conceptually, they both understand it, i.e. they grasp its meaning and overall conceptual import (assuming that the speech event succeeds). The speaker and hearer are the relevant **conceptualizers** for whatever conceptualizations we identify as the semantic values of expressions. To the extent that a speech event is successful, the conceptualizations they entertain **as** an expression's meaning are the same in central and crucial respects (though obviously they can never be precisely identical). In Figure 3(b), therefore, I have shown the speaker and hearer as entertaining the conceptualization constituting an expression's meaning.

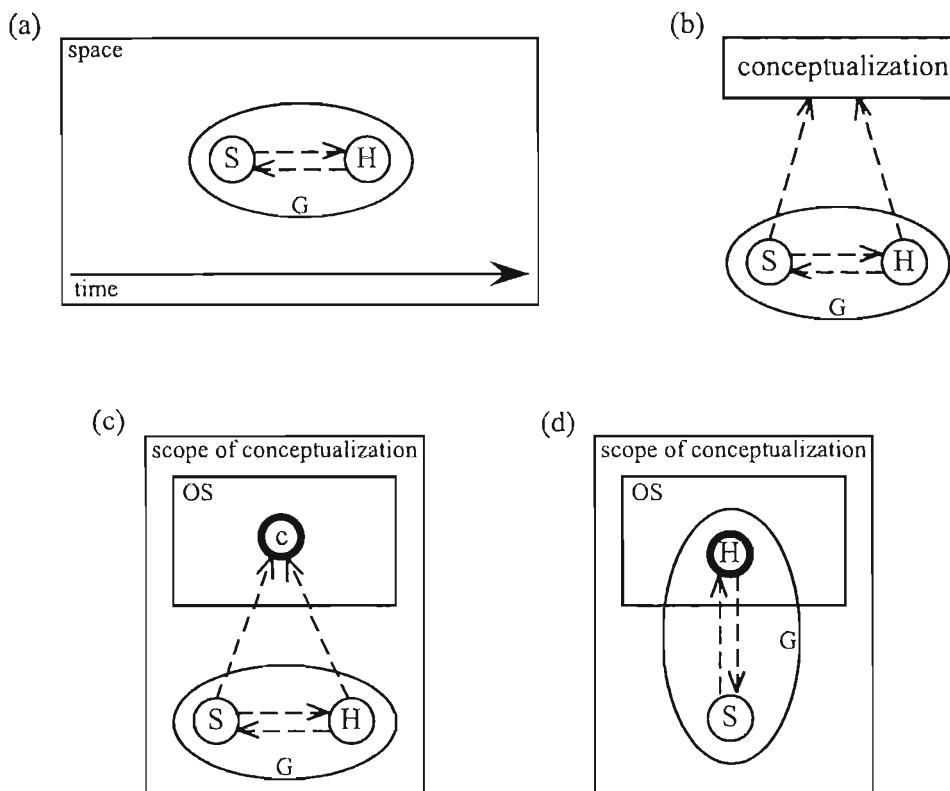


Figure 3.

As it stands, Figure 3(b) is inappropriate because it implies that the interlocutors and the ground are totally external to the conceptualization, i.e. that they themselves do not figure in the expression's meaning. In (1), however, the definite articles and the tense marker both invoke the ground as inherent facets of their meaning: *the* indicates that the speaker and hearer are able to direct their attention to the same instance of the type specified by the noun (e.g. the same *cat*), and tense locates a situation relative to the time of speaking.

For a phrase like *the cat*, then, the configuration of Figure 3(b) has to be replaced by 3(c), where the overall **scope** of the conceptualization—the full extent of the conceptualization constituting the expression's meaning—includes the conceptualizers themselves. To be sure, the expression does not explicitly **mention** the speaker or hearer, but it does specifically invoke them and indicate their ability to co-identify the intended referent. Metaphorically, we can say that the interlocutors are **offstage**, viewing the focused situation onstage. The **onstage region** (OS) is the general locus of 'viewing' attention within an expres-

sion's scope. The specific focus of attention, the onstage element an expression designates (or refers to), is called its **profile** (indicated by heavy lines). In the phrase *the cat*, the interlocutors are invoked, but only the cat is profiled.

Of course, it is also possible for a facet of the ground to go onstage as the specific focus of attention, i.e. as an expression's profile. This is the case with forms like *I*, *you*, *here*, and *now*. Sketched in Figure 3(d) is the pronoun *you*, which puts the hearer onstage as the profiled referent.

Deictic elements—those invoking the ground—are often considered pragmatic rather than semantic because their specific import is intrinsically tied to the 'here-and-now' of the speech situation, hence never precisely the same in any two occurrences. This argument makes sense only on a radically objectivist view of semantics, which strictly identifies an expression's meaning with the external entity (out there, in the world) that it refers to. A deictic element can however be attributed a constant meaning in a conceptualist semantics. The pronoun *you*, for example, has the stable schematic meaning of designating the addressee, irrespective of who the addressee might be on a particular occasion. There can be no quarrel that deictic elements (*I*, *you*, *here*, *now*, articles, demonstratives, tense inflections) are part of a language, by any reasonable definition. The most natural and unified approach is thus to characterize deictics as bringing the ground within their semantic scope, just as any other aspect of our mental world can be brought within the scope of expression.

Even when implicit, the ground functions as a kind of **conceptual substrate**, anchoring the conception of the entities explicitly coded as onstage foci of attention. The ground is not the only tacit element thus invoked. In addition to the conceptions put onstage and explicitly coded, an expression's scope comprises a vast, multifaceted conceptual substrate which shapes them, supports them, and provides their coherence. Facets of this substrate include the following: (i) the physical, social, and cultural **context**—both the immediate context (currently apprehended) and presumed shared knowledge; (ii) the **viewing arrangement**, i.e. the relationship between the conceptualizers and the situation being conceived and linguistically expressed; (iii) **mutual assessment** by the interlocutors of what the other knows and is now attending to; (iv) the **ongoing discourse** itself, including the conceptual structures evoked and constructed as it unfolds; and (v) how all the foregoing factors **develop** and **change** as discourse proceeds (their history, current status, and future projection).

2. Contextual embedding

Let us then consider what might belong to the conceptual substrate supporting a normal use and understanding of sentence (1), *The cat is on the mat*.

2.1 Shared knowledge

One facet of this substrate is the presumption that I am speaking English and using the structural units of English in a normal way. *The cat is on the mat* is, after all, a perfectly good sentence of English, but as an instance of Dutch, Hopi, or Japanese it is hopelessly ill-formed. Similarly, (2) is very bad if interpreted as a sentence of English.

(2) *De kat ligt op de mat*.

The point is not a trivial one. An instance of language use qualifies as such only by virtue of being understood as manifesting a particular linguistic system. This in turn rests on the conception of there being a community of speakers who largely share this set of linguistic conventions and regularly employ them in speaking and understanding. I suggest that the conventional value of every linguistic unit includes the very fact of its belonging to such a system and thus evokes the cognitive model representing the community of speakers employing it. Linguistic units are abstracted from **usage events**, and incorporate whatever is constant across the events giving rise to them (Langacker 2000). One feature of such events is precisely that they occur in the context of using a particular language.

More generally, the sociocultural status of linguistic elements is part of their conventional linguistic value to whatever extent it is apprehended by speakers. Today, for instance, forms like *Taliban*, *al-Qaeda*, and *burqa* are at least peripherally established as elements of English, since they are frequently and conventionally used in speaking and writing it. Yet speakers are also aware of their special status, that they are being imported into English usage from some other language somehow connected to events involving Afghanistan. The conception of these circumstances is one aspect of their meaning. With time and continued use, of course, these associations will lose their salience and perhaps fade away

altogether. *Taliban*, *al-Qaeda*, and *burqa* may become comparable to such established English lexemes as *pizza*, *taco*, *sushi*, *baklava*, and *crème brûlée*.

Apprehension of the status of words as native or imported shades into sociocultural knowledge more routinely considered linguistic. For instance, linguistic markings of relative social status (e.g. honorifics) make reference to cultural practices and social relationships as the basis for their meanings. Another dimension of meaning is register and standard context of use. In the context I described for (1), it would not really work to replace *cat* with a seeming paraphrase like *kitty*, *pussy*, or *feline*. *Kitty* carries with it a nuance of childishness; *pussy* is childish, informal, or crude; and *feline* is formal and technical. In these and many other cases, specifications that have to be considered linguistic (by virtue of being entrenched, conventional, and used in speaking a language) evoke sociocultural knowledge as the basis for their characterization, and require an assessment of the immediate sociocultural context for their use on particular occasions.

Thus, if (1) does not appear to invoke the sociocultural context in any crucial way, this is only because the elements involved represent **defaults** or unmarked cases. Though we take it for granted, a default value is nonetheless a value, which can be made more visible by contrasting it with other conceivable options. Thus (1) contrasts with (3)(a) by referring to the cat in neutral rather than childish fashion, with (3)(b) by the absence of any words saliently recognized as being of non-native origin, and with (3)(c) by being casual and colloquial rather than verbose and self-consciously formal.

- (3) (a) *The kitty is on the mat.*
- (b) *The cat is on the tatami.*
- (c) *The feline is currently reposing on the floor covering purchased for its comfort.*

In addition to the sociocultural context, apprehension of the physical context is a crucial facet of the conceptual substrate. Obviously, by virtue of seeing the situation reported in (1) I have a much more detailed, finer-grained conception of it than is made available by the sentence itself. I can ascertain such features as the size of the cat, its markings and color, its current posture, its specific position on the mat, the type of mat, its size, shape, and color, etc. Down to some degree of granularity, such

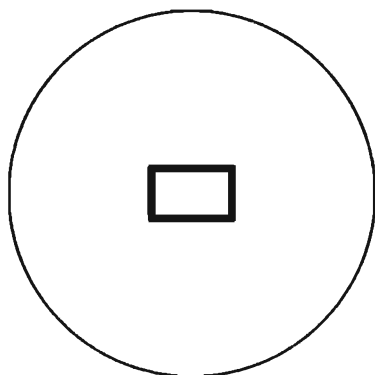
features figure in my contextual understanding of the sentence even though the expression itself leaves them unspecified.

Even here, though, it is hard to draw a rigid boundary between what is linguistic and what is extralinguistic. How much, for example, is subsumed by the meaning of *cat*? Certainly our shared knowledge of cats, well established in our culture, includes a specification of their usual size, common markings and colors, and typical postures. If we take the position that the meaning of *cat* taps into this conventional knowledge, in the manner of Figure 2(b), and if the situation described is normal in relation to it, then it is hard to argue that the expression's contextual understanding in these respects is truly distinct from its conventional linguistic value. When I see a cat, I am likely to estimate its size in reference to the size range considered typical, hence accessible through the cultural model evoked by the lexeme. My estimation of its size may constitute a refinement of this specification, or else a departure from it, but in either case my specific conception emerges from the cultural model rather than being wholly separate and independent from it. The model is recruited for linguistic semantic purposes—as one facet of the characterization of *cat*—and a particular contextual understanding of *cat* evokes it as point of reference.

2.2 *Encyclopedic semantics*

How, then, does the linguistic meaning of *cat*, as a lexical item of English, relate to the overall knowledge that typical members of the speech community have of this kind of creature? The traditional and still-standard view is that the word's linguistic semantic value is distinct from the relevant body of cultural knowledge, being sharply delimited in some fashion and perhaps quite different in nature. Speaking metaphorically, linguistic meanings are usually thought to resemble dictionary entries rather than encyclopedia entries, presenting information that is somehow criterial or systematic as opposed to everything generally known about the referents. Thus the standard view is sometimes called the **dictionary view** of lexical semantics, as opposed to the **encyclopedic view**, which cognitive semanticists tend to embrace (see Haiman 1980; Langacker 1987a: 4.2; Wierzbicka 1995). These are schematized in Figure 4, where the large circle represents everything we know about the type of entity designated by the lexical item.

(a) Dictionary Semantics



(b) Encyclopedic Semantics

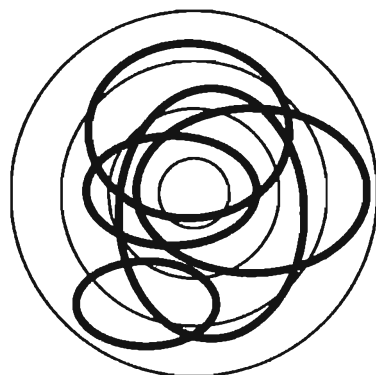


Figure 4.

The problem with the dictionary view is that imposing any particular delimitation of specifically 'linguistic knowledge' (represented by the heavy-line box in Figure 4(a)) seems arbitrary and leaves out specifications perfectly capable of being exploited for linguistic purposes. The encyclopedic view does not presume a definite boundary. Rather, a lexical item draws upon (taps into) general knowledge in a gradient manner, with no specific cut-off point.

It is **not** claimed that a lexical item's linguistic meaning simply **is** the total body of relevant general knowledge. Rather, associated with the linguistic form are certain usual, conventional ways of accessing it. In Figure 4(b), the concentric circles indicate different degrees of **centrality**, i.e. the salience of specifications and the likelihood of their activation when the lexeme is used. Some specifications are central to its value (with a high likelihood of being accessed), others more peripheral (less likely to be accessed). Thus the knowledge base is flexibly and variably evoked, as determined by the context. The heavy-line ellipses are meant to represent certain portions of our total knowledge being activated on particular occasions of use. Established tendencies in this regard constitute one facet of the lexeme's conventional semantic value. However, it may well be the case that there are never any two occasions when exactly the same range of specifications are activated to exactly the same degree. The specific value a lexeme assumes in actual usage need never be precisely the same on any two occasions.

The examples in (4) illustrate the point that any facet of our general cultural knowledge of cats might be drawn upon, activated, and made salient in particular linguistic uses of the lexeme *cat*. Whereas (4)(a)

might activate only central specifications of size, shape, and sound, each of the others evokes information that might well be excluded from a typical, limited dictionary entry—e.g. the association of cats with witchcraft and superstition, alluded to in (4)(e); their proclivity to scratch on furniture, needed to make sense of (4)(g); and the evocation of various kinds of cat excretions, in (4)(h).

- (4) (a) *When she picked up the cat it started purring.*
 (b) *He was saved by his cat-like reflexes.*
 (c) *A cat is a mammal.*
 (d) *It was a real cat-fight.*
 (e) *Watch out for ladders, black cats, and broken mirrors!*
 (f) *Is this bird-cage cat-proof?*
 (g) *Is this sofa cat-proof?*
 (h) *Is this rug cat-proof?*

If encyclopedic semantics is a realistic view (as I believe it is), we have to accept the non-distinctness of linguistic knowledge and the vastness of the conceptual substrate supporting the interpretation and conceptual coherence of even the simplest, most straightforward expressions, like (1). Suppose the mat in question was not purchased for the comfort of the cat. Suppose, instead, that it is a fine Japanese tatami mat, part of our collection of oriental artifacts. In this circumstance *The cat is on the mat* has a vastly different interpretation than in the scenario I first outlined, and even the import of the lexical item *cat* is not equivalent. Salient to the understanding of *cat* in this context will be certain specifications that might well be excluded from a narrow dictionary-style definition: excretion, scratching on furniture, perhaps even shedding. One might of course claim that (1) has a more schematic, purely 'linguistic' meaning common to all its uses, one that excludes such factors. The question, though, is whether this claim represents an apriori assumption or whether language and language use inherently suggest the existence of a clear delimitation. It seems quite evident to me that the limits to what is 'linguistic' are matters of degree, not a matter of sharp, precise boundaries.

While lexical nouns like *cat* may be extreme cases, the same considerations arise with other lexical items, and with other kinds of linguistic units as well. The preposition *on*, for instance, is a 'closed-class' form, hence on the boundary between 'lexicon' and 'grammar'. Of course, as you might expect, I would argue that there is no such boundary, only a

gradation—a view that Cognitive Grammar shares with Construction Grammar (Fillmore 1988; Fillmore, Kay, and O'Connor 1988; Goldberg 1995).

Prototypically, *on* is generally described as designating a relationship involving contact, support, and vertical alignment. In the terminology of Cognitive Grammar, it profiles a **relationship** between two **things**, its **trajector** (tr), or **primary focal participant**, and its **landmark** (lm), or **secondary focal participant**. In (1), the trajector of *on* is the cat, and its landmark is the mat.

This prototypical meaning is sketched in Figure 5. *On* profiles a spatial relationship in which the trajector is in contact with the upper surface of the landmark (the single arrow represents the vertical axis). Moreover, the landmark supports the trajector. Support is a **force-dynamic** notion, in the sense of Talmy 1988. In particular, the landmark offers resistance to the force of gravity which would otherwise cause the trajector to fall. Thus, even though the scene is static in terms of actual motion, it is force-dynamic in that the stasis results from a balance of forces, represented in the diagram by the double arrow.

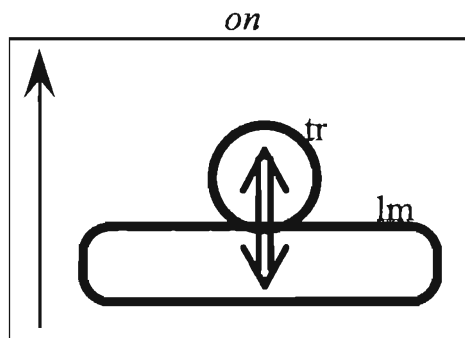


Figure 5.

Can we then say that *on* has an encapsulated, purely linguistic meaning, comprising just the elements shown in Figure 5? Certainly its conceptual import is more limited than with a noun like *cat*, and also more schematic, being compatible with an open-ended array of possible kinds of trajector and landmark. Some varied instantiations of these schematic participants are provided in (5)(a). However, even limiting our attention to physical situations, we find that *on* is conventionally employed in a highly flexible manner, such that the basic factors of contact, support, and verticality are salient to varying degrees and sometimes absent altogether. Just as *cat* is variably construed in (4), with different specifica-

tions being activated or activated to different degrees, so *on* is variably construed in (5)(b). Most of these examples lack the canonical vertical alignment of trajector and landmark, or even reverse it (*the fly on the ceiling*). The notion of support may be non-salient or absent altogether (e.g. *the image on the TV screen*). Though more persistent, even the notion of contact can be modified or suspended. In *the food on the table*, it is probably the case that the food is on plates or in containers, so that it does not actually touch the table directly (there may also be a tablecloth). We speak of *accent marks on vowels* even though the marks are generally written above the vowel symbols without touching them.

- (5) (a) *the cat on the mat; the vase on my desk; the crow on that branch; the sunken ship on the ocean floor; the snow on the roof; the people on this island; the astronauts on the moon*
- (b) *the painting on the wall; the fly on the ceiling; the dust on my glasses; the spots on that cow; the image on the TV screen; the food on the table; the accent marks on these vowels*
- (c) *the scar on his forehead; the birthmark on my leg; the mole on her arm; the blemish on his cheek; the pimple on my chin*

Obviously, the specific way we interpret such expressions depends on our knowledge of the entities involved and draws upon a vast inventory of familiar scenarios pertaining to typical situations encountered in the world and in a particular culture. These scenarios provide default interpretations for *on* and for classes of expressions where *on* has certain kinds of trajector and/or landmark elements. Naturally, the defaults can be overridden in specific contexts (e.g. *the image on the TV screen* might refer to a photo attached to it with tape, so that the notion of support is indeed evoked). Still, such interpretations can be established as part of the language in the sense of being psychologically entrenched and conventional in the speech community. It is a conventional fact of English—one that could be otherwise and that we specifically have to learn—that entities like scars, birthmarks, moles, blemishes, and pimples can be described as being *on* the body part where they are found, as exemplified in (5)(c). This rather specific fact of conventional usage is part of a full characterization of *on* in a complete, **usage-based** linguistic description (Langacker 1988, 2000; Barlow and Kemmer 2000).

If we confine our attention to prototypical examples like (5)(a), characterized in full generality, as shown in Figure 5, one can still argue the non-distinctness of linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge. Certainly it is part of our general knowledge of the world that objects exist in space, that they come in contact with one another, that space has a vertical axis, that objects have surfaces, that objects are susceptible to the pull of gravity, and that one object may support another and keep it from falling. Thus, if the meaning of *on* is anything like what linguists think it is, we can hardly see it as anything other than a particular evocation of general world knowledge grounded in everyday bodily experience. What would the meaning of *on* amount to if all such knowledge were excluded?

The point is so basic and obvious that it might seem trivial—how could it be otherwise? How could linguistic meanings represent anything other than the evocation, exploitation, and adaptation of the conceptualizations constituting our general knowledge of the world? Is this not what everyone has assumed all along? Even scholars advocating the dictionary view of linguistic semantics, or the reduction of meaning to bundles of semantic features, could perfectly well interpret the ‘linguistic’ specifications or the features as special adaptations of general conceptual knowledge. Yet it is not really obvious that this is what such scholars have in mind. Certainly it is not the way they usually talk. To the extent that one adopts this view, I see it as undermining the common doctrine that language represents a separate ‘mental faculty’ (Fodor 1983), that language processing is ‘encapsulated’ vis-à-vis the rest of cognition. In other words, I question the very coherence of talking in terms of a separate language ‘module’, at least to the extent that meaning is involved.

2.3 *The non-autonomy of grammar*

As ‘closed-class’ elements, prepositions would be on the borderline between lexicon and grammar if there were any such boundary. Instead, the vast body of research in cognitive linguistics and Cognitive Grammar suggests their continuous nature. Specifically, lexicon and grammar constitute a gradation fully describable as assemblies of **symbolic structures** (form-meaning pairings). Consequently, all grammatical elements are meaningful. Though generally more schematic than lexical meanings, ‘grammatical’ meanings have also been shown to be grounded in embodied human experience. I can only briefly mention a few examples.

Modal verbs, even when used epistemically, are analyzed in force-dynamic terms (Talmy 1988; Sweetser 1982; Langacker 1991: 6.3). In examples like (6), the modals specify inclinations—having varying degrees of force—to accept as true the situation being assessed. *Must* indicates an irresistible force, *should* a strong one, and *may* a very weak one (maybe just the absence of a barrier).

- (6) *This cat {must/should/may} realize that the mat is more comfortable than the floor.*

Basic grammatical notions pertaining to clause structure likewise derive their prototypical semantic values from force-dynamic aspects of our everyday bodily experience (Langacker 1991, 1999a: ch. 1). In particular, a subject is prototypically an agent (hence an energy source), an object is prototypically a patient (affected by the agent's exertions), and transitivity is based on the transmission of energy from agent to patient along an 'action chain' (Rice 1987). Demonstratives and definite articles can be characterized in terms of a mental operation closely associated with the physical act of pointing. Roughly speaking, demonstratives single out (mentally point to) an intended referent, and in some uses are actually accompanied by a physical pointing gesture [☞]:

- (7) *I like this [☞] kitten better than that [☞] one.*

A definite article indicates that this mental pointing has already been effected, so that coordinated mental reference can be taken for granted (Figure 3(c)). I might also mention the common phenomenon of motion verbs like *come* and *go* grammaticizing into markers of tense and aspect (e.g. the futurate *be going to*), and of spatial prepositions grammaticizing into markers of grammatical relationships (e.g. *to* for indirect objects, *by* for passive agents).

- (8) *Mats are going to be given to our cat by countless admirers.*

I would argue, then, that grammar is meaningful, that it grades into lexicon (rather than representing a distinct, autonomous 'component'), and that it too develops from independent phenomena from which it cannot be strictly separated. It might further be noted that grammatical constructions—as well as sounds and phonological patterns—share with

lexicon the possibility of having a particular sociocultural status. For example, the sentential-subject construction is decidedly more formal than the corresponding impersonal:

- (9) (a) *That the cat likes the mat is obvious.*
 (b) *It's obvious that the cat likes the mat.*

Honorifics sometimes take the form of special grammatical constructions (not simply lexical items). In phonology, certain sounds or sound combinations may be associated with words considered 'foreign'. Likewise, a phonological operation may be keyed to a particular register or vocabulary stratum.

2.4 Context

We have been examining the contextual embedding of linguistic expressions. A major component of the conceptual substrate supporting an expression's meaning resides in apprehension of the physical, social, and cultural context, both the immediate context and presumed shared knowledge. Before proceeding, I want to emphasize the importance of the word **apprehension**, which is the key to linking context and cognition. It is quite wrong to assume (as is commonly done) that a cognitive account of language ignores or in any way precludes a description of its use in context and its grounding in sociocultural interaction. On the contrary, I maintain that contextual and sociocultural factors are relevant to language only insofar as they are **apprehended** by interlocutors, and this brings them within the realm of conception. If the interlocutors are totally unaware of some feature of the present context, that feature cannot be contextually induced as part of an expression's meaning. For instance, when I say to my wife *The cat is on the mat*, we may both understand it as indicating that the cat is lying rather than standing—me because I see the cat, and my wife because she knows we bought the mat for the cat to sleep on. Suppose, however, that we both naively believe that our cat is flealess. We are both unaware that our cat currently has exactly 391 fleas. While the fleas are part of the physical context of utterance, due to our ignorance the existence of the fleas is not part of our contextual understanding of the sentence, nor is their number, nor are their current locations on the cat.

So far, I have limited myself to what might be considered 'normal' interpretations of (1). On hearing this sentence in a neutral context, we are likely to imagine a situation roughly comparable to Figure 6. Can we say, then, that a slight schematization of this conception—one that neutralizes certain minor points of variation (e.g. the shape of the mat, the markings on the cat)—constitutes the expression's linguistic meaning?

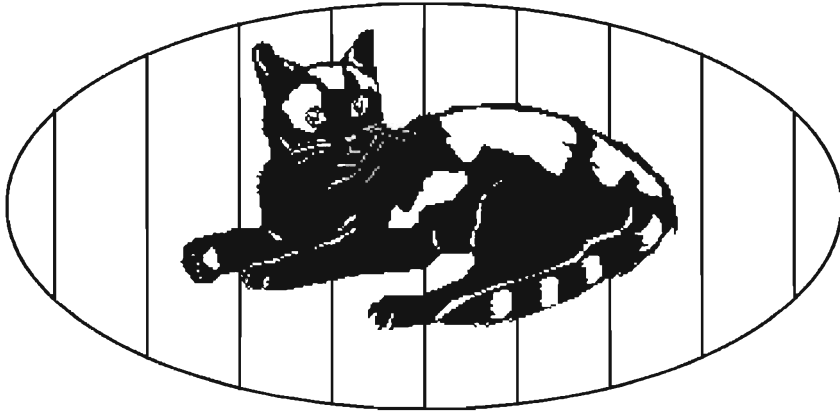


Figure 6.

Any such statement would have to be strongly qualified. For instance, the image does not reflect grounding (its relation to the speech event). It does not capture the status of (1) as a statement rather than, say, a question. More fundamentally, it is misleading to speak of **the** linguistic meaning of an expression. The definite article implies that there is only one, thereby suggesting some way of precisely delimiting the scope of what is 'linguistic'. I am arguing, however, that anything resembling what we would take to be an expression's meaning rests and draws upon an elaborate, multifaceted conceptual substrate, with no specific line of demarcation being possible. Conversely, any particular meaning we ascribe to a sentence presupposes some context—either the actual context or some imagined one. If a certain meaning appears to be acontextual, this is only because the contextual features presupposed represent defaults.

Default specifications are usually invisible to us, precisely because they are defaults and we take them for granted. To make them visible—to render apparent how much our understanding of even simple, normal expressions depends on a tacit conceptual substrate—we can imagine various scenarios in each of which a non-standard interpretation emerges and is unproblematically accepted as the expression's meaning in that context. If there is anything that is truly acontextual (not just a matter of

presupposing a default context), it has to be common to all these scenarios and countless others. A few are listed in (10).

- (10) (a) Rather than being spread out flat on the floor, the mat is rolled up in a bundle, and the cat is perched on top of it.
- (b) The mat is mounted on a wall, and the cat is climbing it.
- (c) The mat is stretched out over a ditch, as a kind of bridge, and the cat is crossing over it.
- (d) It is a magical mat serving as a flying carpet, and the cat is still clinging to it, having so far managed not to fall off.
- (e) A worker in a mat factory has just finished decorating one by painting a cat on it.
- (f) We are using the mat as the screen for a slide show. Testing it with the picture of a cat, we finally manage to get the projector set at the right angle and distance.
- (g) A giant cat is eating all the furniture in a house. It has already eaten a chair, a sofa, and a bed. It has now started to eat our prized tatami mat.
- (h) Two children amuse themselves by engaging in wrestling matches with their pet cat. A child wins a match when it succeeds in pinning the shoulders of the cat to the imaginary mat on the floor. When she does so, the other child—serving as referee—announces her victory by uttering (1).

While some of these scenarios may seem far-fetched, they are all at least conceivable and provide contexts in which *The cat is on the mat* would naturally be taken as describing something very different from the type of situation depicted in Figure 6. Moreover, with the exception of *on* in (10)(g), the lexemes are used in more or less their prototypical senses—the meaning differences do not stem from polysemy, as that term is usually understood. Hence any feature of Figure 6 that fails to be manifested in these other scenarios does not derive from the ‘linguistic meanings’ of the component elements, if linguistic meaning is narrowly construed in accordance with standard practice. This has to be supplemented by default knowledge of various sorts: how mats are typically placed and used in our culture, typical postures of cats, the relative size of cats and mats, etc. If it is argued that these specifications are actually part of the lexemes’ meaning—e.g. that part of the meaning of *mat* is that

mats are normally spread out (rather than being rolled up) and lay flat on the floor (rather than being mounted on a wall)—I would certainly not disagree. One of my central points is precisely that a lexical item's meaning taps into such general cultural knowledge, that it does not constitute a separate and distinct cognitive representation.

3. *Viewing arrangement*

3.1 *The default*

Let us however assume that everything goes by default, so that an utterance of (1) is in fact intended to describe a situation like Figure 6. The defaults in question pertain to the nature of the scene described, hence to the **onstage** portion of the conceptual substrate supporting the expression's meaning. Equally important is the **viewing arrangement**, i.e. the relationship between the conceptualizers and the scene onstage. Here too there is a multifaceted default. In the **default viewing arrangement**, the interlocutors are together in a fixed location, from which they observe and describe actual occurrences in the world around them. The default viewing arrangement is exemplified by the canonical scenario for (1) presented at the outset.

In the default arrangement, the interlocutors are together offstage and interact in various ways in the process of describing the onstage occurrence. For instance, each apprehends the other and the nature of their social relationship. The speaker directs the utterance at the hearer, who understands that the speaker is doing so. An essential aspect of their interaction is an ongoing **mutual assessment** by the interlocutors of what the other knows and is now attending to. Obviously, this assessment is crucial in determining what is coded explicitly, the form its expression takes, and the specific interpretation of overt elements.

My choice of the particular expression *The cat is on the mat* to describe the scene in question reflects numerous assessments of my interlocutor's knowledge and current awareness. For instance, the definite articles in (1), and the absence of adjectives, reflect my assessment that the scope of what my wife is likely to expect me to be talking about contains only single instances of the *cat* and *mat* types. Otherwise I might say something like (11)(a) instead. In producing (1) rather than (11)(b), with the adverb *still*, I am presupposing the absence of any knowledge about

the current situation representing the continuation of an earlier one. I naturally assume that my wife is aware of the time and location, so that in describing the current scene I do not have to specify them, as in (11)(c). In pronouncing *cat*, *on*, and *mat* with unreduced stress, I am presuming that all of these elements are new to the discourse, and that I need to bring them into the scope of my wife's attention. In other circumstances, I might destress all the elements except those capitalized in (11)(d)-(h).

- (11) (a) *A cat is on our new mat.*
- (b) *The cat is still on the mat.*
- (c) *The cat is on the mat in the house at 347 Melrose Drive, in Fargo, North Dakota, at 9:33 PM on Wednesday, July 11, 2001.*
- (d) *The CAT is on the mat.*
- (e) *The cat is ON the mat.*
- (f) *The cat is on the MAT.*
- (g) *The CAT is on the MAT.*
- (h) *The cat is ON the MAT (not UNDER the HAT).*

These variations still presuppose the default viewing arrangement. Obviously there are many ways in which actual viewing arrangements deviate from this default. In fact, there are so many kinds of departures from it, and they are so common, that pure cases of it may be relatively infrequent. Here is a partial list: (i) self-directed speech, internal monolog; (ii) the speaker and hearer are separated in time or space; (iii) written texts; (iv) the evocation of 'fictive' entities (even for describing actuality); (v) interaction other than description, reporting, or assertion; (vi) some facet of the ground is put onstage. Such departures from the default arrangement affect the specific form an expression takes and determine its specific conceptual import. An expression's meaning is strongly shaped and influenced by the nature of the viewing arrangement it manifests. I would argue that, within this facet of the conceptual substrate, there is no clear boundary between 'linguistic' and 'extralinguistic' factors.

Only canonically does the speaker describe the situation in order to inform a listener. Commonly the speaker engages instead in self-directed speech or silent internal monolog. Here, as in (12), there is no intent to inform. The verbal encoding may be just a matter of mentally registering the scene and fixing it in memory via linguistic symbolization.

- (12) *Oh, the cat is on the mat. I guess I should have it cleaned tomorrow.*

With modern technology, spoken communication is possible without the speaker and hearer being in the same place at any one time. This of course impacts the form and meaning of expressions by affecting what it makes sense to say. For instance, the utterance *I'm not here now* makes perfect sense as a message on an answering machine, but requires some non-literal interpretation in face-to-face communication (e.g. that my mind is wandering). A perfectly coherent meaning emerges when the scope of conception makes reference to the actual, non-default viewing arrangement involving an answering machine and how it is used by owner and callers. Observe that the adverb *now* in (13) refers to the time of calling, and involves the speaker taking into account the listener's experience at that time, hence the creation of an imagined co-presence at the time of calling.

- (13) *I'm not here now. I have to buy a mat for my cat.*

3.2 Writing

By its very nature, writing constitutes a significant departure from the default viewing arrangement, where speaker and hearer become writer and reader. Beyond this, each kind of writing defines its own special viewing arrangement. Here I will merely note that the conventionalized, canonical form of a particular kind of writing is shaped in obvious ways by the conceptual substrate, in this case consisting of the culturally sanctioned apprehension of the writing's purpose and method of use.

Consider signs, which have their own conventional styles and standard forms, often telegraphic (cf. Sadock 1974). The text in (14) might be used on a sign intended to ensure that the cat's sleep is not disturbed:

- (14) *CAT ON MAT — USE BACK DOOR*

The telegraphic style conventional for signs involves more than just economy of expression. Missing in particular are elements like articles, demonstratives, and tense, which relate a profiled thing or relationship to the ground. With signs, there is no actual ground—the writer is usually

not present, there is no specific reader, nor any specific time of reading. Whenever it might have been written, the message can be apprehended by anybody at any time who happens to notice it. Arguably, then, this aspect of the form stems directly from the viewing arrangement inherent in the very nature of a sign. It is nonetheless conventional in a speech community, hence part of the language. There are specific patterns of expression associated with these genres, and speakers master them as one facet of their conventional linguistic knowledge. The characterization of these patterns incorporates a schematized representation of the kind of situation they apply to. In this way, once more, the 'pragmatic' circumstances are brought within the scope of linguistic semantics.

Similarly for the patterns followed in writing letters, e.g. formal letters like (15):

(15) *347 Melrose Drive*
Fargo, North Dakota

July 11, 2001

Dear Mr. Logan,

The large cat sculpture I ordered was finally delivered. Unfortunately your deliverymen placed it on the fine Japanese tatami mat that is the centerpiece of my oriental art collection. It is crushing the mat, and too heavy for me to move. Please send your deliverymen again to move it for me. Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,
Harvey A. Quinn

There is a standard way of indicating the writer and intended reader, as these are specific individuals. The time and place of writing are specified, since these are not otherwise apparent to the reader. A description of these conventions takes the form of a **template**, a **schematic** canonical letter, which particular letters instantiate to the extent that they follow convention. Inherent in this schema is the very conception of what a letter is and the viewing arrangements it implies for the writer and the reader.

The conventions for written genres may differ in specifics and degree from those of spoken language, but Cognitive Grammar treats them in analogous fashion. It claims, in fact, that all conventional linguistic knowledge takes the form of schematized linguistic structures, which are abstracted from **usage events** and then employed in subsequent events (Langacker 1987a, 1988, 2000).

3.3 *Fictivity*

In the default viewing arrangement, expressions are used for the direct description of actual occurrences, and thus refer to actual individuals and actual relationships in which they participate. In the canonical use of (1) described at the outset, the cat and the mat represent actual individuals, and the profiled spatial arrangement is an actual relationship. Surprisingly often, however, the entities directly referred to linguistically are **fictive** (or **virtual**) in nature. I am not primarily thinking here of the use of language in creating and describing imaginary worlds (e.g. in a myth or novel). Beyond this, we very often resort to the linguistic description of fictive entities even for purposes of describing actual occurrences (Langacker 1999b).

A case in point is **fictive motion** (also called ‘abstract’ or ‘subjective’ motion), illustrated in (16). Despite the use of motion verbs and directional elements (*run, go, from, to, up, down*), nothing in the scene actually moves—the motion and its direction are virtual or subjective, a matter of the conceptualizer **mentally scanning** along the length of the mark in building up to its full conception. Yet the situation described is an actual one. How the conceptualizer mentally accesses the scene is one, highly intrinsic aspect of the viewing arrangement. This facet of the conceptual substrate is undeniably part of the expressions’ linguistic meaning, as it is directly responsible for the contrast in their forms. (For extensive discussion, see Langacker 1986; Matsumoto 1996a; Talmy 1996.)

- (16) (a) *That funny white mark on my cat runs from its forehead down to the tip of its nose.*
 (b) *That funny white mark on my cat goes from the tip of its nose up to its forehead.*

Fictive motion is a special case of **fictive change** (Fauconnier 1985, 1997; Matsumoto 1996b). In (17)(a), it is probably not the case that any actual mat undergoes a change in size or quality. Instead, the conception of change emerges through a particular mental construction: by comparing the size and quality of the different mats successively purchased for the cat, and viewing these mats as if they were the same object, a change in the properties of this fictive object can be perceived.

- (17) (a) *My cat's mat keeps getting bigger and more luxurious.*
 (b) *broken line; sunken bathtub; striped cat; curved handle; rounded corner*

In (17)(b), the modifiers are adjectival past participles, which normally designate the state resulting from a change (*broken stick; sunken ship*). Yet a *broken line* never actually undergoes the process of breaking, a *sunken bathtub* never actually sinks, and nobody puts the stripes on a cat. Once again, the change expressed linguistically is not in the onstage situation per se, but rather in the subjective, offstage apprehension of the scene. In this case it inheres in the conceptualizer's apprehension of how the actual configuration in question departs from the canonical situation evoked as a point of reference.

Fictive entities are commonly invoked for the purpose of making generalizations. Suppose I have gone from house to house taking a census of the cats in the neighborhood. Being impressed at how well they are treated, I might utter the following:

- (18) *In three houses, a cat was even on a mat.*

There were three cats and three mats. Observe, however, that in the main clause both nominals are singular: *a cat, a mat*. Moreover, these nominals do not refer to any actual individual. The cat and the mat directly referred to linguistically are fictive in nature, virtual instances of their types that are 'conjured up' in order to express a generalization concerning three separate experiences. The main clause profiles the virtual situation shown at the top in Figure 7—it is this fictive state of affairs that is directly coded linguistically, hence the singular forms. This virtual structure represents the abstract commonality of the three actual situations. As a generalization rather than an actual occurrence, the virtual situation is a mental construction. The meaning of the sentence comprises the entire

configuration in Figure 7: the virtual situation, together with the specification of how it maps onto actuality, which is partially expressed by the adverbial *in three houses*.

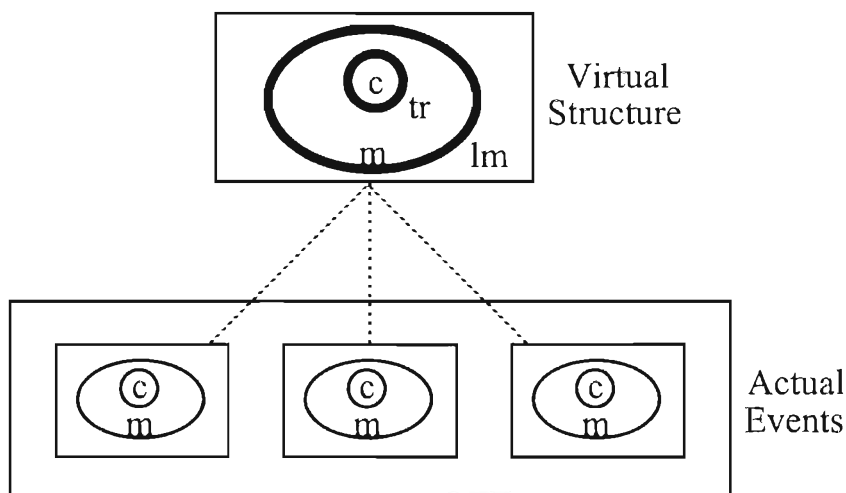


Figure 7.

Generic sentences are comparable, except that the generalization is offered as a **global** one pertaining to the world's inherent nature, rather than a **local** one concerning contingent occurrences (Goldsmith and Woisetschlaeger 1982; Langacker 1997a). In (19) the entities directly referred to are fictive once again, but the supporting conceptual substrate is different by virtue of incorporating a different kind of mental construction.

(19) *A cat sleeps on a mat.*

The potential for fictivity is not limited to onstage elements within the scene described. Any aspect of the conceptual substrate, including the speech situation itself, can be virtual rather than actual. For instance, the presumed **vantage point** is sometimes a fictive one. As a special case of this, the so-called 'historical present' hinges on adopting a fictive **temporal** vantage point. The historical present involves another kind of mental construction, in which past events are conceptualized as being available for current viewing, in a kind of 'mental replay', as if we were viewing them during their occurrence in the past. This entire complex situation, this very special and partially fictive viewing arrangement, comes into play in shaping the expression's form, and is certainly part of its mean-

ing. For instance, the adverb *last night* in (20) reflects the **actual** temporal vantage point (a facet of the ground), whereas the present tense reflects the **virtual** situation of immediate observation.

- (20) *I come home last night, and at first everything seems normal. My newspaper is waiting on the table. The cat is on the mat. ...*

Even the interaction between speaker and hearer can be fictive in nature. The message on an answering machine is intended to create the fiction of a direct verbal encounter (recall (13)). It also frequently happens that the speaker engages in the fiction of performing a certain kind of **speech act**. For instance, in the first sentence of (21), the speaker pretends to make an assertion. The second sentence then makes it clear that the speaker is not being serious; juxtaposition with a sentence that is blatantly false, indeed ridiculous, indicates that the first is also considered ridiculous and was uttered with ironic intent. This two-layered interaction—with a pretend assertion embedded in a larger interactive frame revealing a very different intent—represents a conventional pattern of English discourse.

- (21) *The cat is on the mat. And George Bush is wise, intelligent, and intellectually honest.*

3.4 *Speech acts*

The term **speech act** (Austin 1962; Searle 1969) refers to what kind of interactive force an utterance is intended as having: assertion, questioning, ordering, warning, promising, etc. This 'illocutionary force' is an essential part of the conceptual substrate, clearly falls within the realm of linguistic meaning, and helps determine the form of expressions. Illocutionary force can be regarded as an aspect of the ground, since it inheres in the speaker/hearer interaction, and also as an aspect of the viewing arrangement, how the interlocutors relate to the onstage situation. These should not be thought of as separate and discrete, but as different facets of the complex conceptual substrate relative to which overtly expressed content is meaningful and coherent.

A declarative sentence like (1) is generally taken as representing the speech act called **assertion**. This requires clarification and qualification. First, the term assertion is rather pretentious, suggesting formal argumen-

tation, a point of dispute for which evidence must be provided, the need to persuade a reluctant interlocutor. While this may represent the ideal of professional philosophical discourse, it is not the usual mode of discourse for real people. In the canonical scenario for (1), I do not need to persuade my wife of the truth of the statement, I am merely informing her. Even **informing** might be too strong a term for the speech act force of simple statements. For instance, it could be that my wife and I both look into the living room and see the cat taking advantage of its new sleeping arrangement for the first time. In this context I could perfectly well utter (22). I am not even informing my wife about the situation, for I know she is already aware of it. I am merely registering it and describing it with the expectation that she will apprehend its import—in the context of a canonical verbal exchange, presupposing cooperation, mentioning something amounts to a weakly directive act intended to focus attention on it.

(22) *Look at that, will you. The cat is on the mat.*

However we characterize this ‘assertive’ force, it is **not** inherent in the meaning of a declarative finite clause. A clause like *the cat is on the mat* can be used in countless ways where there is no intent to assert the proposition it expresses. One example is irony, as in (21). Here are some others:

- (23) (a) *It is not the case that the cat is on the mat.*
- (b) *Conceivably the cat is on the mat.*
- (c) *It is quite unlikely that the cat is on the mat.*
- (d) *Danforth mistakenly believes that the cat is on the mat.*
- (e) *If the cat is on the mat, I’ll need to vacuum it.*
- (f) *The cat is on the mat, you say. Well, I suppose it’s possible.*

By itself, a declarative finite clause merely evokes and describes the profiled situation, without specifically according it any particular status vis-à-vis truth or reality. It is thus compatible with larger contexts that deny its reality, assess its likelihood, etc. When a declarative clause is used for assertion, its intrinsic conceptual value is embedded in an **interactive frame** representing this type of speech act. This tacit interactive frame is a schematic characterization of the speaker and hearer interacting in the manner constitutive of an act of assertion. In an actual case of assertion, the actual ground (speaker, hearer, and speech event) is identi-

fied with the one portrayed in the schema. Because this mode of interaction is minimal, and most directly reflects the default viewing arrangement, it is itself a default. As is typical of defaults, it is coded by zero, i.e. the absence of any special marking indicating departure from the unmarked case. In non-default uses, like those in (23), the larger context signals that the default interactive frame is not being invoked and specifies what alternative status is being accorded to the proposition expressed.

An essential part of the conceptual substrate, therefore, is the apprehension of the intended interactive force, which is often implicit and often quite complex. To the extent that particular interactive frames are familiar and conventional in a speech community, they achieve the status of conventional linguistic units—they are part of a language in the sense of being among the established structures deployed in speaking it. Of course, they are sometimes overtly expressed, or indirectly observable through the effects they induce. Most obviously, they function as the basis of the meanings of verbs describing conventionally recognized kinds of interaction: verbs like *say*, *ask*, *order*, *promise*, *warn*, *christen*, etc. They are also invoked to characterize the prototypical semantic values of basic sentence types: the frames for assertion, questioning, and ordering provide the prototypical meanings of the structural sentence types known as declarative, interrogative, and imperative. Of course, each sentence type is extended to other uses, implying other (overall) semantic values.

As part of a language, then, I am positing a substantial number of conventional units representing established interactive frames, as well as more elaborate units that include them. In schematized form, the frames make reference to the ground and incorporate the specifications known as 'felicity conditions' to characterize the scenario within which the interaction takes place. The more elaborate units that include them specify their combination with other linguistic units, such as the schemas representing declarative clauses or other clause types.

A few such units are sketched in Figure 8(a). A declarative finite clause can occur independently of any speech act frame, e.g. as a conditional or complement clause; examples were given in (23). The default is for such a clause to be embedded in the assertion frame, as in a canonical utterance of (1). This being the default, it is not overtly marked, at least in English.

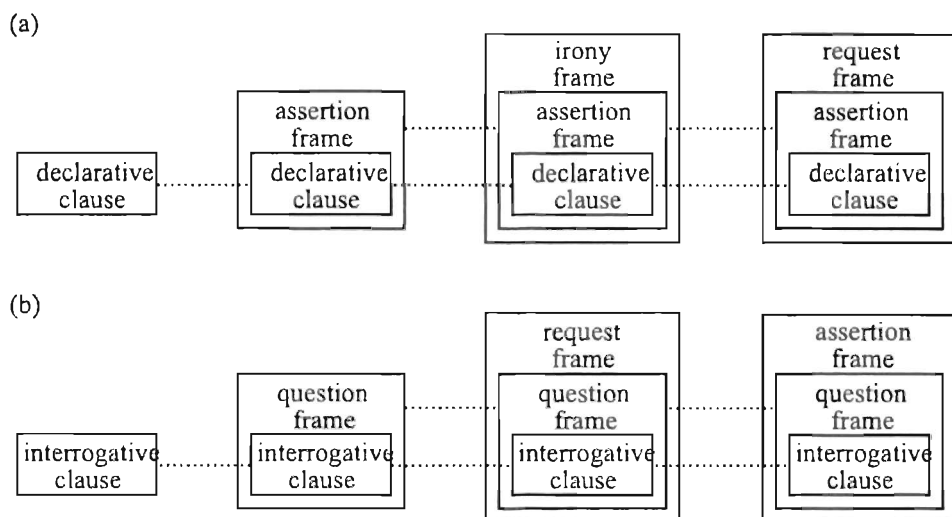


Figure 8.

Also shown in Figure 8(a) are two more elaborate linguistic units, where a declarative clause framed as an assertion is embedded in another interactive frame. One such frame, exemplified in (21), involves ironic intent—the assertion is fictive in nature, its force overridden by the interactive structure it is embedded in. An assertion can also be embedded in a request, the statement then being interpreted as grounds for making or deducing the request. An example is (24)(a), which might be said to the clerk in a mat store. The word *please* indicates that the statement is in fact a request, not just a description of the speaker's situation. In other words, the request frame is invoked as part of the conceptual substrate, supporting and making coherent the occurrence of *please*. It is not coherent when the statement provides no basis for deducing a request, as seen by the infelicity of (24)(b). This is of course a matter of degree, subject to contextual modulation. One can almost imagine (24)(c) being uttered by the owner of a mat store to a customer whose cat looks like it is ready to sharpen its claws. Making the danger more explicit, and preposing *please* to enhance the salience of the request frame, results in (24)(d) being quite acceptable.

- (24) (a) *I need a mat, please.*
 (b) **The cat is on the mat, please.*
 (c) *??Your cat is on this mat, please.*
 (d) *Please, your cat is on this fine tatami mat.*

Similarly for interrogative clauses, as indicated in Figure 8(b). While an interrogative clause is canonically embedded in the interactive frame of questioning, as in (25)(a), it can also occur independently of that frame, e.g. as an embedded clause, illustrated in (25)(b)-(c). The combination of an interrogative clause and the questioning frame can further be embedded in other frames to characterize more elaborate kinds of interactions conventionally expressed this way in English. In (25)(d), an act of questioning is embedded in the request frame. Since *please* specifically evokes the request frame, the hearer is not allowed to simply interpret the sentence as an information question regarding what is possible for the speaker. In (25)(e), an act of questioning is embedded in a more elaborate frame amounting to negative assertion. The act of questioning is only rhetorical, or fictive—the speaker does not expect an answer, the implication being that the situation is so preposterous that no answer is possible. The intensifier *ever* is one symptom of this non-interrogative construal.

- (25) (a) *Which cat is on the mat?*
- (b) *I wonder which cat sleeps on this mat.*
- (c) *Which cat sleeps on this mat is completely irrelevant.*
- (d) *Can I have a mat, please?*
- (e) *What cat ever sleeps on a mat?*

3.5 Onstage interaction

Thus it is evident that apprehension of the speaker/hearer interaction, even multiple layers of such interaction, shape an expression's form and are an essential aspect of its linguistic meaning. The patterns in question have to be learned by speakers and are conventionally established in a speech community, and since they are instrumental in speaking a language, they constitute linguistic units. It is also evident that the conceptual substrate includes elaborate mental constructions (in this case pertaining to interaction and interactive intent) that are often not overtly expressed, or expressed only indirectly.

They can however be put onstage and made explicit. In the default viewing arrangement, the ground is offstage, the location from which the interlocutors view and comment on the world around them. This is the configuration sketched in Figure 3(c). Additionally, as seen in Figure

3(d), it is possible for some facet of the ground (in this case the hearer) to be put onstage and profiled as the focus of viewing attention. The interaction between speaker and hearer, including illocutionary force, is also susceptible to being put onstage and focused in this manner.

Let us consider the interactive frame of ordering. The verb *order* invokes this frame as the basis for its meaning. The verb can be used descriptively, as in (26)(a). This type of expression is diagrammed in Figure 9(a), where X represents the person giving the order, Y the person receiving it, and Z the act to be carried out. The double arrow represents the directive force of ordering. Linguistically, X is the trajector, expressed as the subject nominal; Y is the primary landmark, expressed by the object nominal; and the event of Y doing Z functions as a secondary landmark, coded by the infinitival clause. The act of ordering is onstage and profiled by the sentence. The speaker and hearer apprehend this situation from their offstage vantage point, the ground.

- (26) (a) *She ordered him to put the cat on the mat.*
- (b) *I order you to put the cat on the mat!*
- (c) *You put the cat on the mat!*
- (d) *Put the cat on ~~the~~ mat!*

Sentence (26)(b) exemplifies what is called a **performative** sentence (Austin 1962). A performative not only describes a speech act, but is such that its very utterance (under appropriate conditions) constitutes a performance of the act it names. Thus, uttering (26)(b) constitutes an act of ordering, provided that the felicity conditions governing its use are satisfied. Performatives are expressions where the speaker/hearer interaction goes onstage as the profiled event. The speaker/hearer interaction defining the ground is identified with the grounded event profiled by the main clause verb. Hence the speaker and hearer are respectively identified with the clausal subject and object, and the event coincides with the time of speaking (indicated by present tense—see Langacker 2001b).

What about standard imperatives, like (26)(c)-(d)? These are cases where the speaker/hearer interaction has the force of ordering but remains offstage, in its usual position. Because this interactive frame is offstage and implicit, the resulting sentence has just a single, main clause. The contrast between the presence vs. the absence of *you* is a matter of whether the onstage region is made to include the hearer (thus emphasizing the hearer's objective role as actor, resulting in greater imperative

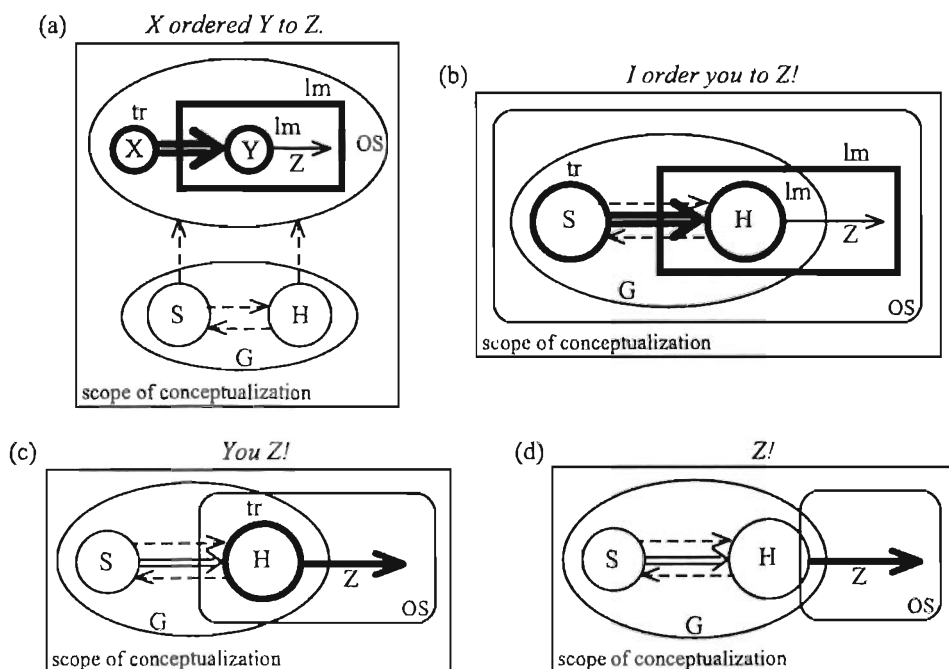


Figure 9.

force), or whether it remains implicit as part of the ground offstage (reflecting the hearer's subjective role as interlocutor).

By now it may be evident that Cognitive Grammar achieves a **unified** account of linguistic phenomena by refusing to impose artificial boundaries for apriori methodological reasons; I have tried to indicate that the boundaries commonly assumed are imposed on language rather than discovered in it. One facet of this unification is the recognition that lexicon and grammar form a continuum (rather than separate 'components') fully describable as assemblies of **symbolic structures** (form-meaning pairings). Thus, counter to the prevailing doctrine of autonomous syntax, I hold that every valid grammatical construct has some kind of meaning (often quite schematic). I think the examples make it clear that the grammatical form of expressions can hardly be accounted for in any revealing way without taking into account their intended meanings. Another dimension of unification pertains to the nature and scope of these meanings. For one thing, there is no specific line of demarcation, but rather a gradation, between semantic vs. pragmatic phenomena, or linguistic vs. extralinguistic knowledge. Moreover, the meanings of linguistic expressions are supported and rendered coherent by a multifaceted conceptual substrate from which they cannot be dissociated. All of our conceptual

resources, including imaginative phenomena and elaborate mental constructions, are brought to bear in making sense of even fairly simple, seemingly straightforward expressions. Still another dimension of unification pertains to the relation between linguistic structure and ongoing discourse, to be discussed.

4. *Mental constructions*

4.1 *Imaginative phenomena*

Among the **imaginative phenomena** playing a central role in linguistic semantics are fictivity, metonymy, metaphor, blending, and mental spaces. **Fictivity** has already been considered (section 3.3). I have suggested that any aspect of the situation described, or any aspect of the viewing arrangement (such as the vantage point, the illocutionary force, or even the speaker/hearer interaction itself), may be virtual rather than actual.

As used in cognitive linguistics, the term **metonymy** is understood quite broadly (Kövecses and Radden 1998; Lakoff and Johnson 1980: ch. 8; Langacker 1984). It can be characterized as a tacit shift in profile, such that an expression which normally designates one entity is instead understood as designating some associated entity. Metonymy is extremely prevalent in language, if not utterly pervasive. Here are a few examples, representing normal modes of expression that do not strike us as being in any way special:

- (27) (a) ***That car** doesn't know where it's going.*
- (b) *Is **your cat** in this directory of famous pets?*
- (c) ***The kettle** is boiling.*
- (d) *We've misplaced **Chicago**.*

In (27)(a), *that car* refers metonymically to the driver. In (27)(b), one would not expect to find the cat itself in the directory, but only a picture and description of it. Unless the fire is extremely hot, it is probably not the kettle per se that is boiling in (27)(c), but rather the water inside. And in (27)(d), *Chicago* might refer, say, to a book about the city that is out of its usual place on the shelf.

Part of our knowledge of a language consists of general, conventionally established **patterns** of metonymy, allowing efficient linguistic reference to entities that are less salient or would otherwise be harder to describe. Some familiar examples are CREATOR FOR CREATION, PLACE FOR EVENT, and PART FOR WHOLE, respectively illustrated in (28)(a)-(c):

- (28) (a) ***This** **Miró** depicts a cat on a mat. **Proust** is on the top shelf.*
- (b) *We didn't learn from **Vietnam**. Remember **Pearl Harbor**.*
- (c) *They pay their top **brains** a lot. The coach put **fresh legs** in the game.*

Certain patterns seem so natural and obvious that even linguists just take them for granted. Yet they have important linguistic consequences and are conventional in the sense that the situation could well be otherwise. For instance, we normally refer to the whole even when only a part is involved in the event described. Thus (29)(a) is not interpreted as indicating that the banana's peel was eaten; in (29)(b), only the unlit end of the cigarette is presumed to be in the mouth; the only part of Sally that does anything in (29)(c) is her eyelids; and (29)(d) is appropriate even if only the paws of the cat are in contact with the mat.

- (29) (a) *I ate **a banana**.*
- (b) *He has **a cigarette** in his mouth.*
- (c) ***Sally** blinked.*
- (d) ***The cat** is on the mat.*

Also quite regular in English (and perhaps in all languages) is the natural phenomenon of extending the term for an entity to some image or representation of that entity. This makes possible the use of (1) for the scenarios in (10)(e)-(f), involving the image of a cat.

Metaphor has been extensively explored in cognitive linguistics (e.g. Lakoff 1987, 1990; Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999; Turner 1987; Lakoff and Turner 1989; Kövecses 1990; Grady 1997; Grady and Johnson 1997). A basic insight is that metaphor is not in general just a property of particular expressions, but is rather **conceptual** in nature, residing in a set of **mappings** (or **correspondences**) between elements of a **source domain** and a **target domain**. The source and target domains can be very complex, with an elaborate set of correspondences connecting them. Often-discussed examples include LOVE IS A JOURNEY, A THEORY IS A BUILDING,

and ANGER IS A HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER, respectively illustrated in (30)(a)-(c).

- (30) (a) *Our relationship took a wrong turn and got off course, but now we've found our way and are making progress—we're almost there.*
 (b) *His theory is shaky and rests on weak foundations. Unless he can shore it up, the critics will demolish it.*
 (c) *She's seething. Unless she vents her anger, she's going to explode.*

Thus metaphors represent elaborate mental constructions productively invoked in speaking and understanding.

Just as there are conventional patterns of metonymy, so there are conventional patterns of metaphor. For instance, one general pattern likens a person to an animal, the import being that the person exhibits a salient stereotypical property of the animal in question. Instantiating the general metaphor A PERSON IS AN ANIMAL are any number of more specific metaphors, such as A PERSON IS A PIG, A PERSON IS A FOX, and so on:

- (31) (a) PIG: *Don't be such a pig! Eat more slowly!*
 (b) FOX: *He's a crafty old fox.*
 (c) TIGER: *You don't want to fight with her—she's a real tiger.*
 (d) LEPOARD: *There's no use trying to reform him—he'll never change his spots.*

Naturally, A PERSON IS A CAT is well-entrenched in our culture. In fact, since cats have numerous culturally salient properties, this metaphor shows up in various kinds of linguistic phenomena, each highlighting a different property:

- (32) (a) *Don't be afraid of him—he's a pussycat.*
 (b) *It was a real cat-fight.*
 (c) *They didn't arrest him right away—it was a cat-and-mouse game.*
 (d) *She purred her approval.*

Such examples strengthen the case for the encyclopedic view of linguistic semantics, since they show that any facet of our general knowledge about some kind of entity can be exploited for linguistic purposes.

In this metaphor, the source domain is our knowledge of cats, and the target domain is our knowledge of people. Metaphorical mappings equate the cat with the person, and properties or behaviors of a cat with properties or behaviors of a person. Even relatively simple metaphors like this one can be exploited in novel ways for linguistic purposes. One well-known property of cats is that they sleep a lot. Thus, if our daughter is always taking naps, my wife and I might start referring to her metaphorically as *the cat*. Suppose, moreover, that mats are thought of in our culture as being the usual place for a cat to sleep, to the extent that the phrase *on the mat* is well established as a metonym for being asleep. Under these circumstances, *The cat is on the mat* might well be readily interpreted as meaning that our daughter is asleep (i.e. taking what is called a *cat-nap*). This follows from factors that are entrenched and conventional, hence part of the linguistic system, at least within our family (a speech community, albeit a small one).

In recent years, Fauconnier, Turner, and others have called attention to the ubiquity and importance of conceptual **blending** (e.g. Fauconnier 1997; Fauconnier and Turner 1998a, 1998b, 2000; Coulson 1996). Blending is the projection of portions of two conceptual structures into a distinct third structure—the **blend**—which often has **emergent properties** not inherited from either input. It has come to be accepted that metaphor involves the creation of a blend with the source and target domains as inputs. The metaphor A PERSON IS A CAT evokes a blended creature that has the form and basic nature of a person, with the addition of certain cat-like properties. It is characteristic of blends that they are fanciful, involving the conception of entities that could not actually exist. Blends are nonetheless real as objects of conception, and quite significant in linguistic semantics.

Sentence (33) was heard during the recent American impeachment era, when Bill Clinton went to the mat with his political opponents (who portrayed him as a tomcat):

(33) *If Bill Clinton were the Titanic, the iceberg would sink.*

The sentence immediately made perfect sense, even though it is entirely fanciful. As shown in Figure 10, the two input conceptions are that of the

Titanic (T) colliding with an iceberg and sinking, and that of Bill Clinton (BC) wrestling with his political opponents. The conditional clause tells us to construct a hypothetical blended space in which a Clintonesque Titanic collides with an iceberg playing the role of political opposition. By virtue of the correspondences established, the political opponents are indirectly portrayed as being cold, rigid, unyielding, massive, and dense. They are also portrayed as losing the political battle. The conception of the iceberg sinking is projected from the blend back onto the political struggle evoked as one input, with the consequence that the political opponents are seen as declining in fortune and stature (as indicated by the dashed arrow).

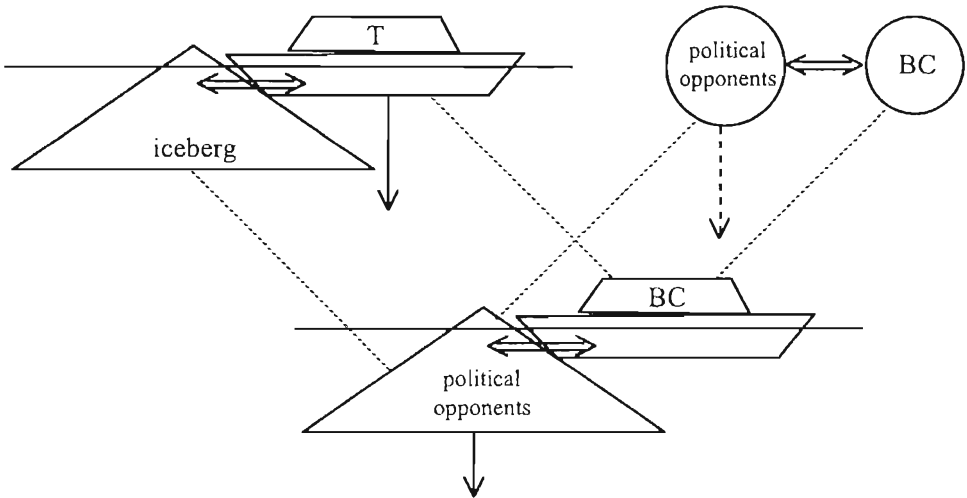


Figure 10.

To apprehend the meaning of (33), or even to render it conceptually coherent, we must invoke two domains of background knowledge (concerning the Titanic and recent American politics), create a fanciful (and literally impossible) blended conception whose elements correspond to the inputs in particular ways, conceive of what happens in the blend (the politicized iceberg sinks), and on that basis make the correct inferences about the political situation functioning as one input. Sentence (33) is clearly meaningful, and all these factors are indispensable for computing its meaning.

4.2 *Mental spaces*

The input and blended conceptions, as well as the source and target domains of a metaphor, are examples of **mental spaces**. The construction and negotiation of mental spaces was brought to attention by Fauconnier (1985, 1997) and has been extensively explored by many scholars (e.g. Cutrer 1994; Dancygier and Sweetser 1997; Doiz Bienzobas 1995; Fauconnier and Sweetser 1996; Langacker 1996, 1997a). The term mental space refers in very general terms to a conceived world or state of affairs, with no commitment to its real-world status. A speaker creates these spaces for conceptual or expressive purposes. They are separate representational or computational spaces within which elements exist and bear relations to one another, and with some degree of autonomy from other spaces. Elements of different spaces may correspond, but they are not mixed together indiscriminately. For instance, the virtual structure depicted in Figure 7 constitutes a mental space distinct from actuality, as does the hypothetical space established in conditionals (as in (23)(e)), or the space representing someone's thoughts or beliefs (e.g. (23)(d)).

The construction of particular mental space configurations is cued by overt **space builders**, such as the conditional *if* or verbs of propositional attitude like *think*, *believe*, *know*, *hope*, etc. However, much of our mental space construction proceeds without such direct instructions. For instance, both sentences in (34) invoke the same mental space configuration and describe the same circumstances, differing primarily in register. In (34)(b), which is informal and quite colloquial, no single element is identifiable as a space builder. Obviously, though, the space configuration is crucial to the expression's meaning—the sentence does not assert that the cat is on the mat, nor that it is dead. Both situations are construed as being hypothetical, the second a consequence of the first.

- (34) (a) *If the cat is on the mat, I will kill it.*
 (b) *The cat is on the mat, and it's dead meat.*

As an example of how mental space configurations interact with grammar, consider once more the situation described in (18) and Figure 7, where a virtual structure is created to express the abstract commonality inherent in several actual situations. It is this virtual structure, representing a distinct mental space invoked for this special purpose, that is directly coded linguistically (hence the singular nouns). We see in (35)(a)

that, even though a cat has just been explicitly mentioned, referring to it anaphorically with the pronoun *it* can be awkward.

- (35) (a) *In three houses, a cat was on a mat. ??It was sleeping.*
 (b) *In three houses, a cat was on a mat. In each case it was sleeping.*

The reason the continuation in (35)(a) is bad is that the default for a simple sentence in the past tense, such as *It was sleeping*, is the description of actuality, specifically past reality. However, the only available antecedent for the pronoun is the virtual cat—no actual cat has been directly mentioned. Consider Figure 11(a), representing an attempt to integrate the meaning of the second sentence in (35)(a) with that already established in the discourse by the first. (The process of sleeping is represented by an arrow.) When one looks for an established discourse referent to be interpreted as the referent of *it*, none is available. A pronoun and its antecedent must be **coreferential**, which is precluded if one refers to an actual entity and the other to a virtual entity (Langacker 1996).

Observe, however, that the same pronoun is perfectly acceptable and interpretable in the continuation of (35)(b). The difference is that the adverbial *in each case* establishes that the following clause is non-actual. Instead, it too will be interpreted as a virtual structure representing the abstract commonality among a set of actual occurrences, as shown in Figure 11(b). The antecedent of *it* can thus coherently be identified with the cat previously mentioned and salient in the discourse, namely the virtual one referred to in the previous sentence. Moreover, the set of actual occurrences implied by *in each case* can be identified with those invoked by *in three houses* in the first sentence. These identifications are indicated by dotted correspondence lines. When corresponding entities are conceptually superimposed, the result is as shown in Figure 11(c).

The moral is that semantics and grammar cannot be adequately described and understood in isolation from the mental space configurations and other mental constructions being dynamically created in discourse. Conversely, conventional knowledge of a language includes vast arrays of units above and beyond those traditionally recognized. There are, for instance, patterns of metonymy, metaphor, and blending, independent of any particular element, that are nonetheless familiar to speakers and conventional in a speech community. There are conventional patterns for evoking particular mental space configurations, like that in (34)(b), even

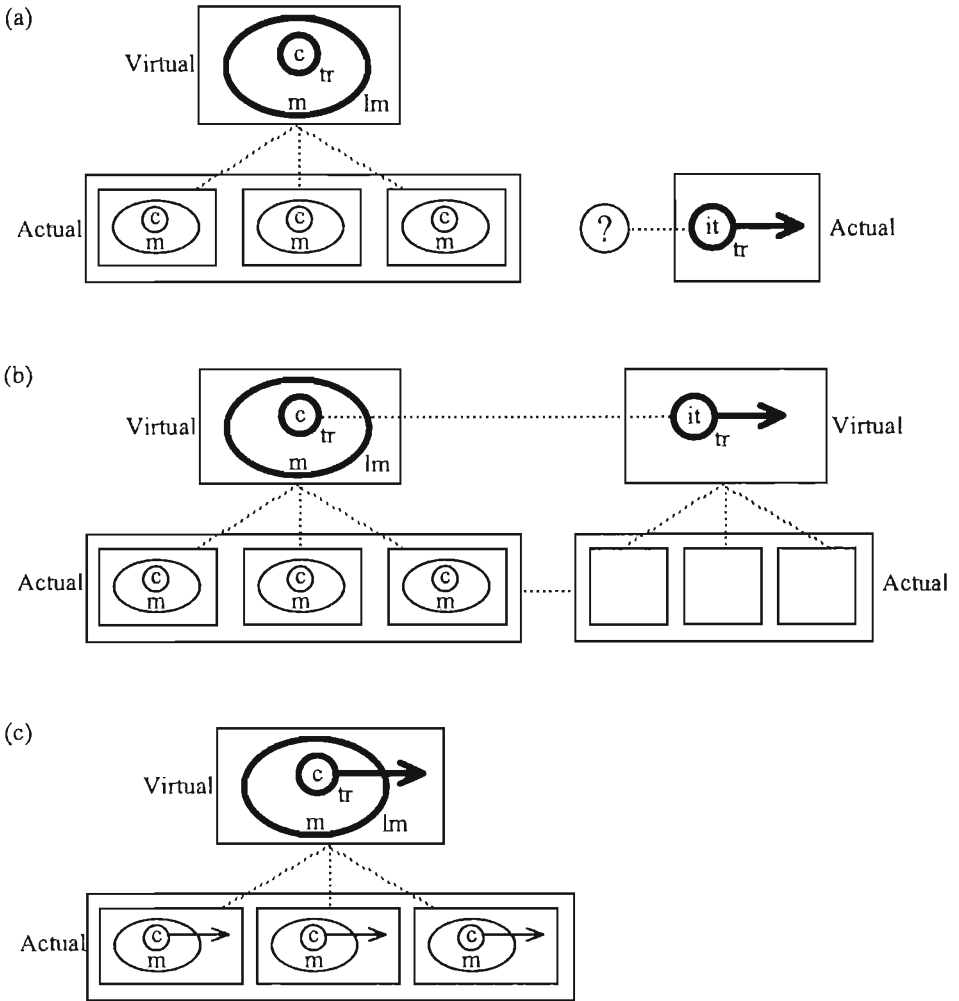


Figure 11.

though no single element can be identified as a space builder. Examples like (35)(b) involve patterns for invoking virtual structures to express generalizations, as well as patterns of anaphoric interpretation based on both grammatical structure and mental space organization. In short, for everything we see on the surface of linguistic form, a great deal is going on below the surface, in the conceptual substrate and in the knowledge of covert units that are linguistic unless excluded by arbitrary fiat. We see, in other words, at most the tip of the iceberg.

The previous example brings us to our final topics, namely **dynamicity** and **connected discourse**. Though I will focus on spoken discourse, it should be evident that here (as elsewhere) analogous considerations arise with written texts. At the discourse level the importance of

dynamicity comes to the fore. I would argue, however, that dynamicity is equally important at all levels of linguistic organization—it is only the larger time scale in discourse that renders it more visible to us.

4.3 *Dynamicity*

What do I mean by **dynamicity**? In one way or another, it refers to how things develop through **time**, which creates the potential for **change** (stasis being the limiting case of zero change). Cognitive Grammar recognizes and incorporates dynamicity in numerous respects (Langacker 1997b, 2000, 2001c). For one thing, linguistic units are not static objects, but reside in patterns of neurological activity. Linguistic structure is **procedural** rather than **declarative**, knowing **how** rather than knowing **that**. Through usage, moreover, linguistic units are constantly undergoing change and adaptation. Their stability is only local and relative. This includes their status as part of the linguistic system: every instance of use (or non-use, for that matter) has some impact on a unit's degree of psychological entrenchment and the extent of its conventionality in a speech community.

Various descriptive constructs central to grammar are characterized in terms of sequential processing. For instance, I characterize a verb in terms of **sequential scanning** through the phases of a process, as opposed to the summary, holistic perspective imposed by nouns and other classes (Langacker 1987b). Various phenomena—including possessive, topic, and anaphoric constructions—are characterized in terms of a **reference point** relationship, a matter of sequenced mental access, where conceptualizing one entity creates the conditions for interpreting another (Langacker 1993). As a special case, I characterize subject and object as first and second reference points accessed in building up to the full conception of a profiled relationship (Langacker 1999c, 2001d).

More generally, how a conceptualization develops and unfolds through processing time is per se an important dimension of meaning. This can be seen in certain word order contrasts. I am not concerned with cases where word order is **iconic** for the sequence of events, or cases where it is used **symbolically** to indicate grammatical relationships. Above and beyond such cases, a difference in word order induces an alternate sequence of mental access that is sometimes **constitutive** of a semantic contrast. Examples are given in (36)-(37):

- (36) (a) *A cat was on the mat.*
 (b) *On the mat was a cat.*
- (37) (a) *The cat is downstairs, in the living room, under the table, on a mat.*
 (b) *The cat is on a mat, under the table, in the living room, downstairs.*

In neither contrast is there any difference in the overt elements in the sentence, their grammatical relationships, or the objective scene described. The meaning difference resides exclusively in how the situation is mentally built up step by step, as determined by word order.

4.4 Discourse

The self-evident dynamicity of discourse has a natural place in this overall picture. Residing in sequences of expressions, discourse is inherently dynamic, above and beyond the kinds of dynamicity just mentioned. Anything I have to say about discourse from the perspective of Cognitive Grammar is necessarily programmatic. Here I can do no more than briefly touch on a few basic points (see Langacker 2001a for fuller discussion).

Linguistic units are abstracted from ongoing discourse, and incorporate in their value any recurring features of the discourse contexts from which they derive. This refers not just to the linguistic context (narrowly conceived), but to the interactive and cultural context as well. I have suggested, for example, that the conventional value of every unit includes the very fact of its being used as part of the linguistic system by a certain community of speakers. Numerous other factors—such as register, relative social status of the interlocutors, occurrence in a particular interactive frame, and so on—can be incorporated in this manner as aspects of the characterization of linguistic units (part of their meanings, in the broadest sense).

As discourse proceeds, elaborate conceptual structures are being constructed, modified, and exploited as the substrate for what follows. A small example is the mini-discourse in (35)(b), involving the successively evoked conceptual structures sketched in Figure 11(b), which are inte-

grated to form the structure in Figure 11(c). A more elaborate example will be presented shortly.

Following a suggestion by Peter Harder (1996), it is easy for the semantic structures characterized in Cognitive Grammar to be interpreted in more dynamic terms as **instructions** for constructing, modifying, or accessing conceptual structures in discourse. Here are a few brief examples: (i) On the encyclopedic view of linguistic semantics, the speaker's using a lexical item amounts to an instruction to the hearer to access a certain body of associated knowledge, and in a certain way (based on centrality). (ii) One facet of an expression's meaning is its choice of **profile**, i.e. some facet of the overall content evoked is singled out as the focus of attention in the sense of being the entity the expression designates. Profiling can thus be thought of as an instruction from the speaker for the hearer to direct attention to the entity in question. (iii) **Space builders** are instructions to open up a certain type of mental space. For example, *if* signals the need to open a hypothetical space, *believe* a space representing somebody's conception of reality, and so on. (iv) A personal pronoun constitutes an instruction to seek out an appropriate referent from among those already established as discourse referents in the current discourse context.

Particular ways of applying linguistic units to the ongoing discourse can themselves become established as conventional units. I have argued, for example, that a finite declarative clause does not inherently carry with it the speech act force of assertion (recall the examples in (23)). Such clauses are however conventionally used in contexts where the interactive frame of assertion is invoked without special marking. Because the embedding of declarative clauses in this tacit interactive frame is thoroughly familiar and conventional, it constitutes an established unit of English, as do higher level units where the assertive use of declaratives is further embedded in interactive frames of irony or requesting (Figure 8(a)). Or recall the scenario where my wife and I consistently refer to our daughter as *the cat* because she is always napping. In this circumstance the specific interpretation whereby *the cat* refers to our daughter is not just a matter of contextual interpretation, but something that is entrenched and conventional in our family, hence itself a linguistic unit within this small speech community.

Such units constitute tacit **augmentations** of other units, incorporating additional specifications that were originally context-induced, but—owing to recurrent usage in similar contexts—have coalesced as established

units in their own right, with no increment in form to mark the augmentation in meaning. Even though they are not traditionally recognized, a linguistic system includes an immense number of augmented units of this sort, representing fixed ways of applying other units in particular discourse contexts (Langacker 1998, 2001a). This general process of augmentation is sketched abstractly in Figure 12.

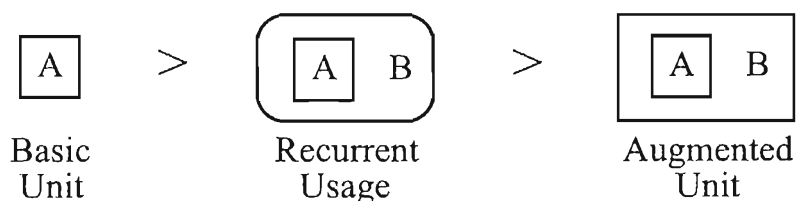


Figure 12.

Let me offer one more example of how linguistic expressions constitute instructions for building conceptual structures in discourse. This will illustrate the point that the ongoing discourse itself, and the conceptual structures thus far assembled, are essential components of the conceptual substrate determining the form and meaning of the current expression.

The slashes in (38) delimit what Chafe (1994) calls **intonation units**. I view these intonationally marked ‘chunks’ of discourse as corresponding to single ‘windows of attention’ (Langacker 2001a). Often, as here, they are single clauses. In Figure 13, we track the conceptual structure being built up as these intonation units are processed, one by one. In each case, the composite semantic structure of the linguistic expression (shown in a box) is interpreted relative to the structure already assembled, the result being an updated structure. Obviously, many details have to be omitted in this presentation. Three mental spaces are relevant: R = reality, the default space and the starting point for structure building; B = a belief space, representing the beliefs of a particular conceptualizer, not necessarily accepted by the speaker as corresponding to reality; H = a hypothetical space, by nature virtual, though it is not precluded that the situation established in this space might turn out to be real.

- (38) *Joe thinks / that if the cat is on the mat / his wife will kill him. /
So he chased it off.*

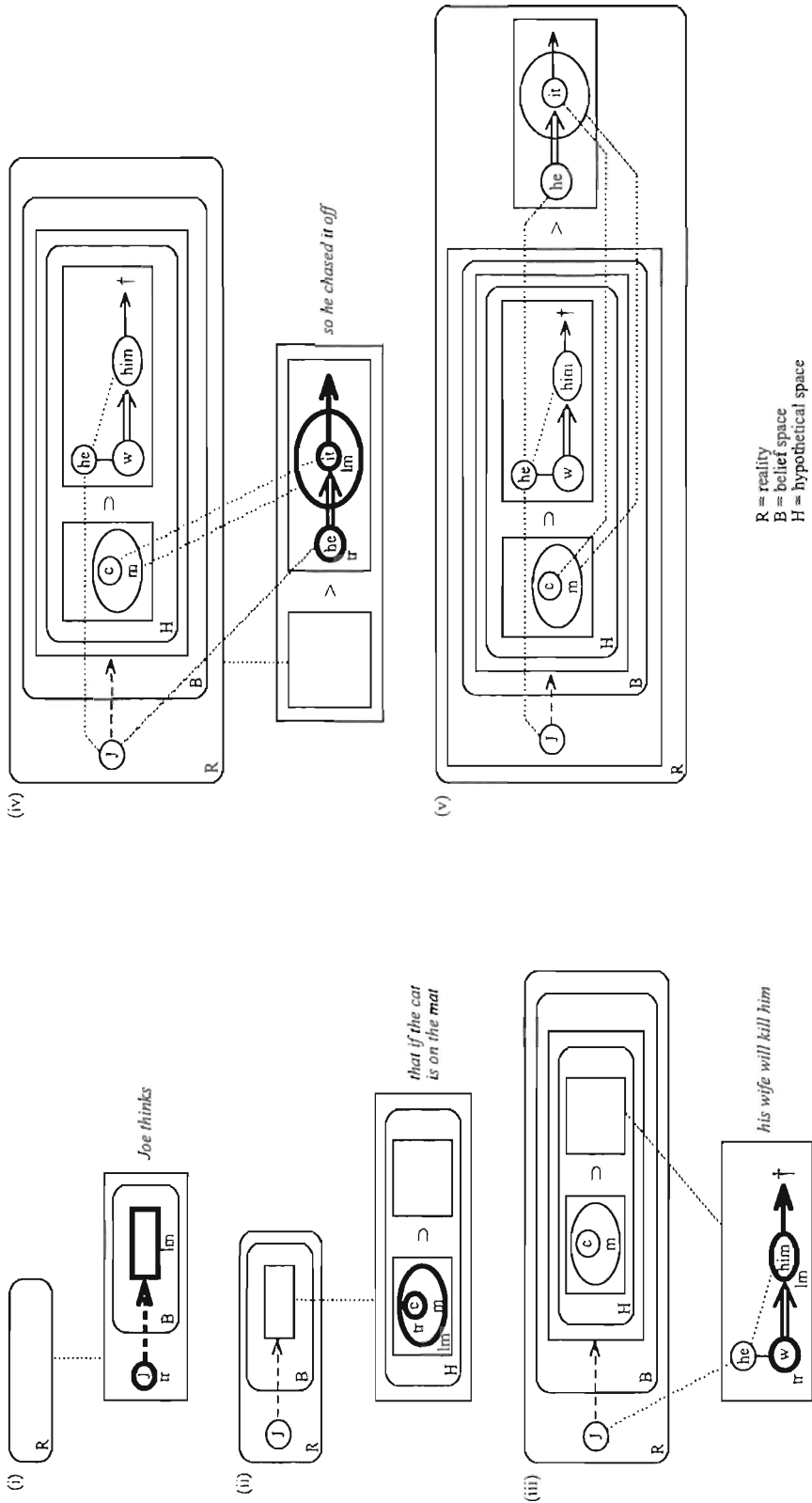


Figure 13

We start at stage (i) by invoking reality (R), since this represents the default. This space is shown as empty, because the discourse has not yet been initiated to establish anything there. (This is of course a gross oversimplification, for a great deal is presupposed as the basis for the discourse.) The first discourse 'chunk', *Joe thinks*, portrays as real the situation of Joe holding a certain belief. A box represents the belief, and the dashed arrow the relationship wherein Joe entertains that belief. The verb *think* is a space builder, so it sets up a belief space (B) containing whatever belief Joe entertains. At this stage, of course, the specific content of that belief remains unspecified (it is represented only schematically). Stage (ii) results from integrating the composite semantic structure of *Joe thinks* with the initial structure from stage (i).

The next intonation unit specifies the content of Joe's belief, hence the dotted correspondence line identifies its semantic value with the box representing his belief in (ii). The expression is a conditional structure, where *if* functions as a space builder and introduces a hypothetical space (H). The import of the conditional construction is that occurrence of the situation described in the *if*-clause implies ($\Rightarrow$) the occurrence of the situation specified in the consequent clause. Hence the expression (*that*) *if the cat is on the mat* not only introduces the former situation, but also induces the expectation of a consequence. The result of integrating this structure with the configuration of stage (ii) is thus stage (iii).

The following clause, *his wife will kill him*, is presumably not to be taken literally. In any case, the process of killing is represented by a double arrow (for causation) and a single arrow indicating the resulting change of state. In accordance with the semantics and grammar of the conditional construction, this event is equated with the consequent event anticipated within the hypothetical space. Additional problems of contextual interpretation are posed by the pronouns, *his* and *him*. A pronoun constitutes an instruction to seek a referent in the current discourse context (cf. van Hoek 1995, 1997). While there are varied possibilities, the one depicted is most the likely. First, the possessor (the *he* inherent in *his*) is identified with the object, *him*. Second, *he/him* is identified as being Joe, the natural choice given that Joe has just been established as a salient discourse referent. These correspondences yield the structure shown as stage (iv).

The final chunk of discourse is *so he chased it off*. This is quite schematic, and would not be very informative when viewed in isolation out of context. However, the structure already assembled at stage (iv) provides

an essential conceptual substrate allowing an informative interpretation. The act of chasing is represented by a double arrow (for causation) and a single arrow indicating resulting motion. The motion is characterized by *off* as starting from the situation where the mover is *on* some unspecified object, and terminating in a situation where it is no longer on it. Internally, however, the clause does not specify the referent of *he*, the referent of *it*, or the object from which the motion starts. Moreover, the word *so* indicates that the clause *he chased it off* is viewed as somehow following from something presented in the immediately preceding discourse, but does not itself specify what. This rather vague relationship is shown as a wedge (>) between two boxes, the second box representing the clause, and the first whatever it follows from.

Correspondence lines show the most likely resolution of anaphoric reference: *he* is identified with Joe, *it* with the cat, and the mat with the implicit object of *off*. Moreover, the preceding situation evoked by *so* is identified with the entire structure assembled thus far in the discourse, hence all of stage (iv) is incorporated in the box representing that situation. The final result is stage (v).

5. Conclusion

I will conclude by briefly reiterating some central points: (i) There is no specific boundary—but rather a gradation—between ‘linguistic’ and ‘extralinguistic’ phenomena. (ii) Linguistic structures cannot be dissociated from the wide range of knowledge and abilities they draw upon. (iii) Conventional knowledge of a language includes vast arrays of units above and beyond those traditionally recognized. (iv) Semantics and grammar cannot be adequately described and understood in isolation from the elaborate mental constructions dynamically created in discourse.

If these points are accepted, we are left with the question of what should be identified as the ‘meaning of a sentence’, i.e. its ‘linguistic semantic value’. Let us consider two extreme options, a **maximalist** definition of meaning and a **minimalist** one.

The **maximalist** option is to say that the meaning of a sentence is its full understanding in the broadest possible sense, including all the inferences that can be drawn on the basis of everything the speaker knows, all their possible ramifications, the speaker’s attitude toward everything mentioned or evoked, everything the sentence brings to mind, etc. This

option, which identifies the meaning of a sentence with its meaning **for** the speaker (or hearer), is reasonable and perfectly coherent. It does not however correspond to 'linguistic' meaning in any usual or intuitively plausible sense. If an utterance of *The cat is on the mat* causes me to think of my childhood and thus to fondly remember the teddy bear that my pet cat tore up with its claws, reference to the shredded teddy bear is part of what the sentence means to me on that particular occasion. However, I would not want to say that it is part of the expression's linguistic meaning, even granted the absence of specific boundaries. The sentence does not evoke the memory of the teddy bear on the basis of established units that are psychologically **entrenched** and **conventional** in the speech community. While matters of degree, these factors do impose limitations on what counts as 'linguistic'.

The **minimalist** option limits linguistic meaning to the specifications strictly derivable from the semantic values of traditionally recognized linguistic units, assuming a restricted, 'dictionary' view of their values. Given the findings of cognitive linguistics, this option has the consequence that linguistic meanings cannot stand alone, but merely serve as fragmentary hints about how to understand an expression on the basis of all available resources. Strictly linguistic meanings are too partial and schematic to be useful by themselves, and may not even be coherent independently. For instance, the linguistic meaning of *The cat is on the mat* would exclude all the specifications that distinguish the default scenario of Figure 6 from all the others listed in (10). With this option also what counts as the 'linguistic meaning' of a sentence fails to correspond to what has traditionally or naively been regarded as such.

The maximalist option fails to recognize that there are limitations to what is contributed by 'linguistic' units even when these are defined quite broadly. The minimalist option fails to appreciate the impossibility of drawing any specific line between linguistic and extralinguistic structures and greatly underestimates the vast array of units that are 'linguistic' to some degree. I therefore take a middle course, adopting a definition that is vague and informal, but may at least reconstruct the intuitive idea that linguists and others have long entertained in referring to the meanings of expressions. I characterize an expression's meaning as including elements that are indisputably linguistically determined, and any additional structure needed to render the conceptualization coherent and reflect what speakers would naively regard as being meant and said, while excluding factors that are indisputably extralinguistic and not

necessary to make sense of what is linguistically encoded. This is not a well-defined notion, but neither is it an essential construct given the theoretical perspective adopted. The inability in principle to draw a specific line of demarcation is precisely what I am arguing.

What, then, is the meaning of *The cat is on the mat*? Obviously, it has no single meaning. However, in the canonical scenario I described at the outset, where a whole series of factors assume their default values, the onstage portion of its meaning may indeed approximate what is sketched in Figure 6. Yet there is far more to the meaning of a sentence than what appears onstage, and far more conventional units are invoked than the lexical and grammatical elements overtly manifested in it.

While I have focused here on spoken language, it should be evident that all the phenomena and levels of complexity I have discussed have analogs in written texts. Indeed, the written medium itself, the permanence of written documents, and the wide array of written genres result in additional layers of complexity and a great proliferation in the store of conventional units available for constructing and interpreting connected discourse.

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SEMANTICS, INFERENTIAL COGNITION, AND UNDERSTANDING TEXT

Arie Verhagen

1. *Introduction*

For the ordinary modern working linguist, a specific text usually provides raw material, a basis for the development of hypotheses, and a testing ground for general ideas about the meaning and structure of the language in which the text is written.¹ In order to allow a text to fulfill such a function, its interpretation is implicitly taken as unproblematic and well-established, at least in some respects relevant to the linguistic analysis involved. The whole point of this methodology is that we want to answer the question whether our analysis accounts for the use of the language in the text, and for the way a competent language user understands the text; so what is debated, hence considered variable, not-yet-fixed, is the linguistic analysis, and therefore one has to keep the interpretation of the text relatively constant. In actual (text) linguistic practice, the empirical basis is often strengthened by collecting readers' responses of various kinds, e.g. by registering answers to questionnaires or measuring reaction times, which testifies to the importance attached to the constancy and intersubjective factuality of the interpretation of a text, if it is to function as a reliable empirical basis.

This relationship is reversed when a linguistic theory is called upon for the purpose of elucidating a problematic (part of a) text. In such a situation, what is debated (variable, not-yet-fixed) is the interpretation of the text, and if the linguistic information is to be of any help, it must itself be taken as relatively constant. The linguist presents an assumption about, for example, the meaning of a word as well established and there-

¹ I want to thank Jan Boersema for sharing some of his considerable knowledge of the Old Testament with me, as well as a number of his Bible translations and commentaries. Without his contribution, it is highly unlikely that the observations in section 3 of this paper would have made it to this version, and I might actually have decided on another topic. Naturally, the views expounded here and all remaining errors are entirely my own responsibility.

fore reliable, and proceeds to argue on that basis how the text should or might be interpreted, attempting to find an interpretation that satisfies the meaning of the word optimally.

In principle there is nothing wrong with this situation. It simply reflects the basic uncertainty of interpretive activities as well as of scientific theories. In the case of linguistics, it furthermore reflects the indeterminacy of the relationship between specific usage events and meaning. In the usage-based framework that has become standard in present-day cognitive linguistics, meaning is considered an emergent phenomenon, usually a network of related generalizations over many specific instances of use, and as we know such an inductive relationship can never be established with absolute certainty.

This indeterminacy is something very real, and in fact one of the causal factors in language change. Usage events leave traces in memory and their accumulation gives rise to what we may call hypotheses about meaning (i.e. what the usage events have in common, and other ways they can be related to each other) 'in' the members of a language community; once a hypothesis has been established, even if only vaguely, it guides and constrains further usage, in production as well as perception. In the meantime, newly encountered usage events continue to be integrated into accumulated experience, which may therefore still undergo changes, in individuals and ultimately also on the level of linguistic communities. I will not elaborate this matter further here,² but it should suffice to make the point that to some extent, holding the meaning of a linguistic element constant for the purpose of text analysis is to some extent an idealization. So in this case too, it is important to find a way to justify the idealization, similar to the way the idealization of a constant interpretation is strengthened by means of testing subjects. In practice, a standard way of strengthening a hypothesis about the meaning of some word or construction, is to maximize its empirical scope. Put differently: we feel more confident in the interpretation of a text proposed on the basis of linguistic analysis if such an analysis links the newly interpreted

² See Keller (1994) for a general outline of such an emergentist view of language change. Croft (2000) contains a more elaborate, comprehensive theory of this kind, integrating insights from evolutionary approaches in several other domains.

element in a consistent way to a large body of other uses of that element in many texts.³

Now an additional problem, recognized especially by functional and cognitive linguists, is that the interpretation of a text is never completely determined by the linguistic material itself. Cognitive linguists emphasize the embeddedness of semantic knowledge—essentially just conceptual knowledge conventionally linked to some linguistic form—in general cognition, with no essential boundary between linguistic and encyclopaedic knowledge (Langacker 2002). Pragmatically inclined linguists will perhaps primarily invoke Grice and conversational maxims such as relevance and quantity to conclude that a text's interpretation is underdetermined by what it (re)presents explicitly, since the maxims imply that one does not say what is not necessary to say, and so on. These two perspectives are perfectly compatible, in fact I think they mutually presuppose each other.

However, in the context of the interpretation of old and very old texts, these assumptions seem to lead to a paradox: on the one hand, to be able to interpret the texts, one has to have non-linguistic cultural knowledge, but on the other hand, the texts seem to be the only, or at least most important, source for knowledge of the culture—including cultural 'common places' that need not be expressed explicitly because they were, presumably, culturally shared.

One mechanism providing us with a way to break out of this dilemma is, of course, history. Chains of stories about previous cultures, old texts and old languages link our knowledge to that of previous generations—we do have considerably more than the texts themselves to base interpretations on. But what I would like to present is yet another potential source of information, inspired by a specific branch of functional-cognitive linguistic research, that may point to pieces of implicit knowledge that is important in the analysis of a text.

³ This notion of consistency is crucial in linguistic analysis in general, and for text linguistics in particular; cf. Verhagen (1997).

2. *Inferential cognition*

2.1 *Scalar reasoning*

As I mentioned before, cognitive linguists emphasize the role of general cognition in understanding language and linguistic utterances. It should come as no surprise then, that cognitive linguists attempt to *explain* apparent universals of language structure on the basis of general psychological capacities and mechanisms which, when put to use in the actual use of language, give rise to different lexical and grammatical systems including all their specific and abstract properties. On the other hand, cognitive linguists have recognized what we may call universals of language use. Some of these have to do with the processing and learning of language, but some others have to do with the nature and content of language use itself, with what is usually called pragmatics, because it involves natural reasoning, i.e. drawing inferences. As has been observed by Sperber and Wilson (1986), all linguistic communication is essentially inferential communication, even when it involves a lot of conventions, because meanings cannot be transmitted directly. Any utterance is an invitation to an interlocutor to make some inference on the basis of that utterance. Making inferences, i.e. reasoning, is another basic cognitive capacity, connected but not identical to such capacities as categorization and abstraction, and also a universal mechanism in the use of language. Knowing the meaning of some element of one's language very often, if not always, involves knowing what kind of inferences it licenses, beyond what kind of categorization it imposes on a situation. Moreover, there are in fact special elements whose most important or even sole function in a language is to guide the construction of inferences. It is this aspect that I will focus on.⁴

Consider the following example:

- (1) The tank is half full.

⁴ What follows is inspired by work on scalar reasoning, originating with one of the founders of cognitive linguistics before it was cognitive linguistics (Fauconnier 1975), and especially by the theory of argumentativity in language (Ducrot 1996). The examples (4) and (3) stem from Horn (1997). For a general introduction to this approach (in Dutch), see Verhagen (2002). For an application to the analysis of subjectivity in grammar (synchronically and diachronically), see Verhagen (1995), (2000a), and Verhagen (2000b) and (2001) for other phenomena at the 'interface' of cognition, grammar, and discourse.

This is a kind of categorization, and thus its cognitive usefulness stems from the additional information it provides access to (cf. Taylor 2002 for general discussion). What could be the kind of inferences licensed by an instance of this expression? Many people, of course, would tend to say: 'It depends', viz. on your assumptions. Nevertheless, there is certainly a tendency here for such an expression to count as some sort of positive assessment. Truth-conditionally it is equivalent to an utterance of (2):

(2) The tank is half empty.

But as we all know, the latter is a pessimist's construal of the situation, and as such it is opposed to the optimistic construal expressed in (1). Or to put it somewhat more concretely: while (1) counts as a reassurance, the use of (2) counts as an advice to start looking for a filling station and stop for refueling. We can say that the meanings of *full* and *empty* profile endpoints on some pragmatic scale, a scale which is the base of the meaning of both.⁵

It may seem that the addition of the modifier *half* marks the categorization by means of *full* or *empty* as only applicable to some extent (viz. 50%), and that it is a consequence of this reduction that the inferences associated with the concepts are weakened accordingly. In fact, one might assume that this relationship is a direct and general one: weakening of inferences associated with a concept is no more than a consequence of reduction of its applicability. Plausible as this idea may appear at first glance, it does not seem to be entirely correct. Consider the following two sentences:

(3) The tank is almost half full.

(4) The tank is barely half full.

Observe that there is more fuel in the tank when it is barely half full than when it is almost half full, as depicted in figure 1.

⁵ Langacker's concept 'profile' plays a central role in cognitive semantics. For an overview, see Langacker (1998), and for a good illustration of its relevance in the present context, Van Hecke (2002).

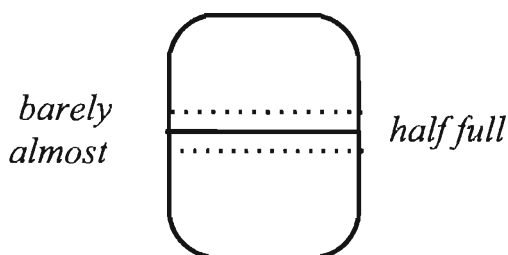


Figure 1. *barely/almost half full: level of fuel.*

But *almost half full* still counts as reassuring, a confirmation of confidence in the distance one can cover without refueling, while *barely half full* counts as a warning, and an advice to start looking for possibilities of refueling soon, despite the fact that in some sort of objective sense, the tank is filled for more than 50% when it is barely half full, while it contains less than 50% when it is almost half full. So what we have to conclude is that such elements as *barely* and *almost* operate **directly on inferences** associated with the concepts they modify, and not via the descriptive contents of the terms as such.

It is important to realize that *barely* does not necessarily evoke the negative idea of a warning and *almost* the positive idea of reassurance. Rather, their effect is dependent on what, in a particular instance of use, the relevant types of inferences are. Suppose, for example, that we are not considering the question whether we should stop for refueling, but that we are actually busy filling the tank, with person A regulating the flow of fuel to the tank and person B keeping an eye on the progress of the process in order to signal to A when it is time to cut off the flow. The utterance of (3) (*The tank is almost half full*) may then count as a warning ('Be prepared: the moment to switch off the flow of fuel is approaching'), while (4) (*The tank is barely half full*) may count as reassurance ('Take it easy: the moment to switch off the flow of fuel is still far away'). The rule is this: whatever the issue associated with the concept mentioned explicitly in the utterance, the use of *almost* confirms the inferences associated with the higher end of the scale involved, whereas the use of *barely* cancels the very same inferences (and therefore tends to evoke inferences associated with the lower end of the scale). This is, admittedly, a rather abstract characterization of the meaning of these two rather mundane words, but the claim is precisely that it must be that abstract because it operates on aspects of conceptualizations that are *not*

evoked explicitly. To me, the very nature of these very ordinary linguistic elements testifies to the normality and automaticity of inferential reasoning in everyday cognition and language use.

2.2 *Grammar and cognition*

For a linguist, this approach is especially useful because it provides a basis for an explanation of some otherwise rather puzzling properties of linguistic expressions. For example, the word *barely* licenses so-called negative polarity items. It functions in many ways like negation, despite the fact that an assertion of the type *barely p* strictly speaking entails *p* and not *not-p*. For example, the phrase *sleep a wink* in English normally requires a negative context, as in 'He didn't sleep a wink last night', while it is not felicitous to say 'He slept a wink last night'. This expression can also be licensed by *barely*, 'He barely slept a wink last night', despite the fact that this entails 'He slept a wink'. For a cognitive linguist, this is just another phenomenon that shows that ordinary language reflects ordinary cognition, in this case: ordinary human reasoning, which is concerned with pragmatic, subjective and intersubjective relevance, rather than with objectivist truth-conditions.⁶

However, this perspective on the function of elements such as *almost* and *barely* is also highly relevant to the analysis of discourse. Consider example (5).⁷

- (5) Our two sons, Charles and George, were playing a game. Half-way through, Charles had 60 points. So the youngest was probably going to win again.

If one knows what game is being played, or which of the two boys is the youngest, one may infer who is predicted to win. It may even seem that one simply *must* know this in order to be able to derive such an inference. But linguistic elements of the type discussed may actually also guide reasoning here, even if one does not possess this kind of information. Consider (6) and (7):

⁶ See Israel (1998) for a detailed elaboration of this view.

⁷ The discussion to follow is based on Lundquist & Jarvella (1994). The example used is adapted to my purposes in the remainder of this paper, but exactly parallel to the original one (confirmed by tests in a number of psycholinguistics classes I taught).

- (6) Our two sons Charles and George were playing a game. Halfway through, Charles had almost 60 points. So the youngest was probably going to win again.
- (7) Our two sons Charles and George were playing a game. Halfway through, Charles had barely 60 points. So the youngest was probably going to win again.

Readers who had read (6) and were asked afterward who they thought had won the game, strongly agreed that it was Charles; on the other hand, readers who had read (7) and were asked the same question, strongly agreed that it was George (cf. Lundquist and Jarvella 1994).⁸ The differences between (5) on the one hand and (6) and (7) on the other, is not that the latter two contain more explicit information about the rules of the game, or the ages of the boys (they don't); it only consists in the presence of the words *almost* and *barely*. But as I have argued, *almost* directs the reader towards some inference associated with the upward end of the scale of fullness, whereas *barely* cancels such inferences. Therefore, (6) naturally invites the positively oriented inference that the number of points Charles has gained makes it likely that he will win, and (7) invites the negative inference that this number of points makes Charles' winning *unlikely*, and consequently the expression *the youngest* must be taken as referring to George.

Again, it must be emphasized that the interpretations I have just sketched, even though readers tend to agree on them to a significant degree, are not really *determined* by the use of *almost* and *barely*, respectively. As an implicit background assumption of these interpretations, I have been using a cognitive model of the general type 'More is better', in this case that the purpose of playing a game is to get as many points as possible. But suppose the rules of the game imply that the points involved are *penalty* points, so that the winner is the one with the lowest amount of points. Then, of course, the whole story is reversed. With such a background assumption, the likely winner, referred to by *the youngest*, in (6) is George, not Charles, and in (7) it is Charles, not George.⁹

⁸ The fact that the consensus seems to be somewhat less strong in the latter case than in the former, may be due to the fact that 'Charles' in (7) is more accessible as an antecedent for the expression *the youngest* than 'George'.

⁹ This once again confirms the point that context plays a role in language use in as far as it is, in the formulation of Langacker (2002), *apprehended* by language users, so that it

The interest of observations like these for linguists is that they tell them a lot about the exact semantic nature of these scalar modifiers, and for cognitive scientists in general it is that they reveal something significant of the character of ordinary reasoning. For text analysts and students of culture, the special interest may arguably be that they point to implicit background assumptions, culturally shared cognitive models,¹⁰ that have to be invoked in the interpretation of texts. I will illustrate and elaborate this idea later. First, let me give some more examples of ordinary language elements that have the function of 'operating on implicit inferences'. Consider examples (8) and (9).

- (8) Our two sons Charles and George were playing a game. Halfway through, Charles already had 60 points. So the youngest was probably going to win again.
- (9) Our two sons Charles and George were playing a game. Halfway through, Charles only had 60 points. So the youngest was probably going to win again.

These demonstrate that *already* functions like *almost* in that it orients the reader to a positive conclusion from the information about having 60 points, whereas *only* functions like *barely* in that it cancels such a positive conclusion. There are also differences, of course. While *almost* invokes an upward orientation of inferences related to the relevant scale despite the fact that a certain limit has not been reached, *already* invokes the same upward orientation while this limit has been reached. Similarly, while *barely* cancels an upward orientation despite the fact that a certain limit has in fact been passed, *only* cancels it while it has been reached. Thus, different elements actually operate on the *relationship between* the situation being described and the inferences to be drawn from it. Other

lends itself naturally to a cognitive approach: both contextual and linguistic information 'only give rise to constraints [on interpretation] *within* a cognitive system' (Verhagen 1997: 30). Verhagen (1997) discusses some conceptual and methodological contradictions arising from a failure to recognize this fundamental point (esp. the idea that what a word means depends on the context of use, vs. the idea that what a word means determines the context of use), and how these can be avoided.

¹⁰ I will use 'cultural model' and 'cognitive model' as more or less synonymous in this paper. In discourse, as communication, only mutually shared cognitive models are relevant, and in texts intended for a relatively indeterminate audience, the models must be assumed to be mutually shared across a community, i.e. cultural.

examples of elements performing such operations on relations between different kinds of situations and inferences are *just*, *merely*, *yet*, *even* and more like them.

A very general linguistic device that must be mentioned here too, is negation, which I already mentioned in passing above. In objectivist approaches to semantics, its primary function is usually considered to be that of marking the reversal of truth-value, i.e. non-correspondence between propositional content and the world (or a possible world). From a functional and cognitive perspective, it makes more sense to consider the primary function of negation to be that it marks a discrepancy between two points of view—an implicit or backgrounded one in which a certain idea is being entertained, and an actual one in which this idea is being cancelled, i.e. non-correspondence between two perspectives. The advantage of the latter view is that it brings to the fore that in terms of their function in discourse as well as in their grammatical behaviour, elements like *barely* and *only* share crucial properties with negation. As mentioned above, in terms of grammatical properties, such elements may license negative polarity items, as straightforward negation does. For textual effects, consider the difference between (6) and the negative formulation in (10):

- (6) Our two sons, Charles and George, were playing a game. Half-way through, Charles had almost 60 points. So the youngest was probably going to win again.

- (10) Our two sons, Charles and George, were playing a game. Half-way through, Charles did not have 60 points. So the youngest was probably going to win again.

While (6) has, as we have seen, a clear positive orientation towards winning, (10) definitely has not. Its relevance in this context is clearly a negative one, i.e. the inverse of the orientation of (6). So for inferential coherence purposes, the negative formulation is actually similar to the one with *barely*, despite the fact that having barely 60 points logically excludes not having 60 points (yet).

The last class of elements I want to mention here is that of discourse connectives. We have already seen one, of course, viz. the element *so* in the examples used so far. As we can see from these examples, *so* marks

what we may call co-alignment of the clause following it with an inference based on the previous discourse: it is a conclusion licensed by the preceding discourse plus inferences derived from it. For the same reason that we had to formulate the function of *barely* as relating to the level of inferences rather than that of truth-conditional propositional content, we also have to formulate the function of *so* as relative to an inferential relationship. In this case, this may even be easier to see than for *barely* and *only*, because the status of the second clause as a conclusion requires at least one more premise than has (usually) been made explicit in the text.

The reverse of *so* in English is *but*. Rather than marking the co-alignment of an explicit text segment with inferences derived from the previous discourse, it marks a discrepancy between the next segment and such inferences from the preceding discourse. For example:

- (11) Our two sons Charles and George were playing a game. Halfway through, Charles had barely 60 points. But the youngest was probably going to win again [anyway, as his brother had even less.]

While in example (7), with *barely* and *so*, we interpreted *the youngest* as referring to George in order to make the discourse coherent, we interpret it as referring to Charles in (11), also for reasons of coherence. In both cases, the first sentence invites the inference that Charles is not likely to win, the difference being that *but* in (11) signals that inferences from the preceding discourse should be cancelled (with the additional clause providing grounds for this move). Again, we have to leave it at this rather abstract characterization, because the meaning of *but* itself does not provide information about the content of the inferences to be cancelled, nor about the specific content of the discourse that is to follow.

'How about the conjunction *and*?', one might ask at this point. While *so* explicitly signals co-alignment of inferences in a text, and *but* a discrepancy, we can say that *and* seems to be unmarked, or neutral, in this respect. It may be that it suggests a common background, or assumed context, to which both the preceding and the following segment relate, but in many cases it is just additive, not to be interpreted in a causal, nor in a contrastive way:

- (12) He said he was sorry, and I think he meant it.

Although *and* does not impose either a co-aligned or a contrastive reading, it does occur in both types of relationships in actual usage:

- (13) He has been stealing, and now he has to pay for it.
- (14) I have been working all my life, and I never got a word of appreciation.

Given the additive character of *and* itself, the co-alignment use in (13) is less marked than the adversative use in (14), which sounds even more like a reproach than a formulation with *but*, but I will not go into that particular aspect further now. In any case, it is clear that a contrastive interpretation of a relationship marked with *and* is completely dependent on our sharing a cultural model, in this case one according to which working hard is something that should definitely be appreciated, at least at some moments in a person's lifetime. Without such an implicit but obviously shared cultural model, a contrastive interpretation is hard to impose on a relationship marked by *and*, witness (12), and the difference between (15) and (16).

- (15) This house is beautiful, and it is cheap [→ all the more reason to buy it!]
- (16) This house is beautiful, but it is cheap [→ perhaps there are hidden defects.]

It is only because of the presence of the explicit contrast marker *but* that we take the second clause as cancelling the inference that we should buy the house (and then look for a background assumption that can be invoked to justify this cancellation, in this case: hidden defects might explain the unexpected low price, and that would be a good reason not to buy the house, despite it's being beautiful).

2.3 *Understanding discourse*

To sum up the discussion so far, coherence between parts of a text may be crucially dependent on the inferences that the segments of the text evoke, more than on the propositional content of the segments by themselves. Scalar operators such as *almost*, *already*, *barely* and *only*,

straightforward negation, as well as connectives such as *so* and *but*, function as signals for the nature of the inferences, which ones should be strengthened and which ones cancelled in the course of 'going through' the text, but inferential coherence of a text is not dependent on them. In a text such as (5), if we know that the game is won when one player has 80 points, we will feel invited to infer that *the youngest* refers to Charles, because the game is halfway and he has 60 points.

But conversely, if we have independent evidence that *the youngest* refers to Charles, then the formulation allows us to infer something about the underlying implicit model of the rules of the game: apparently having 60 points goes a long way to winning, at least halfway through the game. Similarly, when we have linguistic evidence that two text segments are either co-aligned or contrasted, or that a text segment is to be used inferentially in an upward or downward way, this allows us to infer something about cultural models underlying the relationship between the text segments.

The cognitive approach to language use turns the observation, presumably also the philologist's daily experience, that interpretation of an instance of language use is hardly ever determined by language alone, into a fundamental theoretical principle: linguistic and in particular semantic knowledge cannot and should not be separated from general cognition. At first sight, this may seem to reduce the relevance of linguistics for text analysis, and it must, of course, be admitted that its usefulness is inherently restricted anyway. But precisely the recognition that language use involves a considerable amount of linguistically constrained, but not determined, reasoning, can help focus attention on the norms and cultural models involved in the derivation of inferences that allow us to experience a text as coherent, and thus to examine the validity of such models critically. When a text contains scalar operators and connectives of the type I have been discussing, these allow us to infer at least *some* properties of the models that should be invoked when interpreting the text (provided that we have sufficient knowledge of the rules for using the operators and the connectives, which may not always be obvious).

Moreover, such elements can also be used to, so to speak, 'test' properties of hypothetical interpretations, thus providing yet another kind of usefulness of cognitive linguistics in the practice of text analysis. When we feel that adding a certain operator or connective to a piece of a text

simply makes the interpretation clearer or more explicit, without basically changing it, then we are in a better position to examine the implicit models we have apparently been using in our interpretation. For example, consider the interpretation of the second sentence in (17):

- (17) Our two sons, Charles and George, were playing a game. Half-way through, Charles did not have 60 points. So his brother was probably going to win again.

Because of the possessive pronoun, referring to Charles, the interpretation of the last clause is now practically fixed on George's winning. The negation in the second clause makes sense in this respect, as it provides a basis for the inference that Charles is losing the game. But we can strengthen this inference by adding scalar operators such as *even* and *yet*, and this makes the text appear clearer:

- (18) Our two sons, Charles and George, were playing a game. Half-way through, Charles did not even have 60 points yet. So his brother was probably going to win again.

The idea that the coherence of (17) is essentially based on the same grounds as that of (18) can help us to clarify the nature of the implicit cognitive model that these interpretations are based on.

3. *Operators on reasoning in the context of Job 28*

By way of conclusion I would like to demonstrate the validity and usefulness of this idea by comparing some translations of the Job chapter that was chosen as the central text for this colloquium.¹¹ What was especially interesting to me, from the perspective of the approach I have described here, when I looked at a number of translations, were some differences in the way the vv. 20–28 were rendered. Let me use the King James Version as a reference point:

¹¹ The text contains a considerable amount of negations. It is not hard to see that they may indeed be characterized as cancelling possibly relevant inferences. Their specific rhetorical function here seems to be setting up a number of oppositions (between hidden riches of the earth being accessible to man and not to animals, material riches being accessible to man and wisdom not, the latter fact and wisdom's being accessible to God).

(19) Job 28:20–28 (KJV)

- 20 Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?
- 21 Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air.
- 22 Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.
- 23 God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.
- 24 For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven;
- 25 To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.
- 26 When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:
- 27 Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.
- 28 And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

In different translations, different scalar operators show up, sometimes in parentheses, sometimes not, which show something about how the text was interpreted. For example, a reader might wonder what the purpose is of the second clause of v. 21, since the fowls of the air are strictly speaking already included in ‘all living’ things. Thus, the 1951 Dutch NBG translation has added ‘even’ to ‘from the fowls of the air’, marking it as the endpoint of some scale, and thus a particularly strong argument for the first clause, constructed as a conclusion; the 1983 Afrikaans translation also has ‘even’ (unlike the 1933 and 1953 translations), while both the old and the modern German Lutheran translations have ‘also/even’ (*auch*) here.

Similarly, a question may arise as to how we are to integrate v. 22 into a coherent interpretation of the text. Again, that the way to do this is to construe it as a basis for some sort of conclusion, can be seen from several translations in which the scalar operator ‘only’ is added to ‘the fame’, so that it becomes an argument for the conclusion that Destruction and Death do ‘not really’ know wisdom, cancelling the inferential capacity it might otherwise have and thereby making it coherent with the con-

text. This was suggested in an annotation in the 1637 Dutch translation, and it occurs in the text in two modern German translations (Lutheran and 'Gute Nachrichten'), in the 1983 Afrikaans translation, as well as, between parentheses, in the older German Elberfelder translation, and in the modern American *Amplified Bible*.

Looking at v. 23, we can imagine that cancelling any basis for the inference that men might have access to wisdom can also be performed by explicitly marking God as the *only* one with such access, and this is indeed what happens in a number of translations: in the annotations to the Dutch one from 1637, and in the text of the modern German Lutheran translation (not the older one), as well as that of 'Gute Nachrichten', in the 1983 Afrikaans translation, but not in the modern Dutch translation from 1951. An interesting specimen is *The Good News Bible* (The Bible Societies, published in 1976), that uses all of the operators mentioned above and more, and thus renders the vv. 20–23 as follows (italics added –AV):

(20) Job 28:21–23 (GNB)

- 20 Where, then, is the source of wisdom?
Where can we learn to understand?
- 21 No living creature can see it,
Not *even* a bird in flight.
- 22 *Even* death and destruction
Admit they have heard *only* rumours.
- 23 God *alone* knows the way,

...

Precisely these elements guide the derivation of inferences that help a reader construct a coherent interpretation without *explicitly* adding content information, and this undoubtedly contributes to the impression that these verses run smoothly.

Arguably the most telling example of how inferential coherence is constructed on the basis of implicit models, can be found in translations of the very last verse of this chapter. The dominant question is: 'Where can wisdom be found?', at least since this question was first formulated in v. 12. It has immediately been established that the place of wisdom is not 'among mortals'. In v. 23, it is stated that the way to/of wisdom is known

to God. The question for mortals, the implicit agents of the passive *be found*, thus becomes: Will God let them share in the wisdom He has access to? In terms of making inferences to construct a text interpretation, the question is: What implicit models should we invoke, and in what ways should we apply them, in order to construct a coherent interpretation on the basis of the information that is provided explicitly? The explicit information turns out to consist of two things: on the one hand the characterization of the wisdom that God has access to as His understanding of the laws of nature, which He laid down Himself; on the other hand the characterization of human wisdom as the fear of the Lord and departing from evil. The question is: shall we understand these two as co-aligned or as contrasting with each other? Consider the translations of v. 28 in the King James version above with *The Good News Bible* and in the modern American *Amplified Bible*, respectively:

(21) Job 28:28 (KJV)

- 28 And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

(22) Job 28:28 (GNB)

- 28 God said to men,
 'To be wise, you must worship the Lord.
 To understand, you must turn from evil.'

(23) Job 28:28 (AMP)

- 28 But to man He said, Behold, the reverential and worshipful fear of the Lord – that is Wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

With the question 'Where can man find wisdom?' and the information 'God has access to the wisdom that rules the universe which He created', an inference that is at least plausible is 'Man can find wisdom with God'. The use of *but* as in the AMP-translation seems to cancel this inference, construing the fear of God and departing from evil as the maximum on the scale of wisdom accessible to man, so that the even higher wisdom of God is *inaccessible* to man. The use of *and* as in the KJV-translation on

the other hand suggests that the wisdom assigned to man is at most of another type than the wisdom of God, possibly even instrumental for man to participate in God's wisdom. Even if this would not include full insight of exactly the same depth as God's, the underlying models of man, of God, and especially of their relationship, are very different in these two interpretations, which becomes manifest in the difference in derived inferences: in one case the thought 'only God has access to full wisdom' leads to the inference 'this knowledge is forever inaccessible to man', and in the other case to the inference 'man can only have access to wisdom through the fear of God.' The GNB translation, without any connective in v. 28, seems to leave open all possibilities; given that a contrastive relationship involves more inferential work than a co-aligned one, many readers may simply tend to construe a co-aligned reading.¹² Still, leaving out a connective reduces the linguistic constraints on the interpretation—which also involves the risk of leaving readers with the feeling that the text is unclear.

The connective in the Hebrew text of v. 28 is ׀ (*waw*), which is most frequently translated simply as 'and'. In fact, most of the translations I consulted¹³ had 'and' here, rather than 'but'. It is perhaps telling that, besides the AMP-translation, the other ones in my sample using 'but' are all protestant translations, i.e. all the protestant Dutch ones since 1637, a Danish one from 1933, and the Afrikaans translations from 1933 and 1953 (though the 1983 version has 'and'). Substantiating such a correlation would require systematic examination of more translations, but for my present point, this is not necessary. The cases we have seen suffice to show that specific, concentrated attention for linguistic cues that guide ordinary reasoning can focus our attention on the underlying cultural models.

For completeness, let me mention that *waw*, although mostly translated as 'and', is also quite consistently translated as 'but' in certain contexts. A good example can in fact be found in this very same chapter, viz. in v.

¹² Notice that this translation puts the notions of wisdom and understanding into purpose clauses, and in first rather than last position in their respective sentences. This has a strong effect on interpretation (in the direction of co-alignment), but it is beyond the scope of my topic in this paper to elaborate this. For general discussion, see Thompson (1985).

¹³ Viz. ones that I had access to locally, and ones that I could find on the internet, and that I could read sufficiently well myself—not a random selection of the world's translations, but it suffices for my point here.

12, following the exposition of the power of man to extract hidden riches from the earth; in the King James Version this reads:

(24) Job 28:12 (KJV)

12 But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?

In the translations I looked at, this was a very common trait, while here too, the connective used in Hebrew is *waw*. Apparently, then, this element is at least compatible with some contrastive relations, although this could in principle, of course, be disputed.¹⁴ In any case, given these practices of translation, there is not really linguistic counter-evidence to the hypothesis implicit in the translation with 'but' in v. 28.

4. Conclusion

By hypothesis, semantics and cognition are closely related, in a cognitive linguistic perspective. In this paper, I have focussed on a few elements whose meanings are special in that they constrain cognitive operations in particular ways without contributing to the descriptive content of the discourse. As such, they actually testify to the tightness of the relationship between language and cognition; linguistic elements such as scalar operators and certain connectives presuppose cognitive content to operate on, that is not itself represented linguistically. As a consequence, such elements can help us in making inferences about properties of implicit cultural models that have to be invoked in order to construct a coherent interpretation of a text. One occasion to do this, is when such elements are present in a text; and another one, also potentially valuable, is when

¹⁴ My own understanding of the text changes rather dramatically when replacing 'but' with 'and': 'where wisdom is to be found' then simply becomes the next question to ask, having established that man already had great power in extracting material treasures from the earth. For the time being, I take this as a reason to consider 'but' a good translation here. This would imply that there is a real difference between Hebrew *waw* and 'Standard West European' 'and', as the latter is not compatible with certain contrastive relations that *waw* appears to occur in. It might have to do, for example, with the fact that in v. 12, the contrast is at the speech act level, as a question (the one in v. 12 itself) is related to a series of statements.

one wants to test the inferential nature of implicit cognitive models involved in a particular interpretation of a text.

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THE POEM ON WISDOM IN JOB 28 IN ITS CONCEPTUAL AND LITERARY CONTEXTS

Edward L. Greenstein

The poem in Job 28 that asks the question, "And as for wisdom—where can it be found?" (v. 12), has been appreciated and understood as an essentially independent literary unit that contrasts the limited achievements of human know-how with the incomparable wisdom by which God has made the world.¹ I shall endeavor here to set the ideas and imagery of the poem in the pertinent frameworks in which ancient Semitic literature outside the Hebrew Bible conceptualized, figured, and lexicalized divine wisdom; and to draw some conclusions regarding the interpretation of the poem and its proper place in the Book of Job. At the outset let me alert the faint of heart that, while I concur with the main lines by which the core of the poem has been read, I shall suggest a different literary context for reading the poem and a different argument by which to understand it. These conclusions, which comport well with the conceptual models that, I shall suggest, underlie the poem, have the additional merit of resolving certain linguistic, philological difficulties that bedevil the conventional reading and with which very few modern commentators have come to grips. In the end we shall see that the surprising solution to the question, where is wisdom, is remarkable more by virtue of the subtle way it is conveyed by the poet than on account of its constituting a new idea in ancient thinking. The solution is already embodied or implied, in fact, in the great Babylonian compositions that deal with the question.

¹ I wish to thank Prof. Ellen van Wolde, whose invitation to write and present this paper stimulated me to consider my topic from the perspectives of cognitive linguistics. Some participants in the colloquium offered helpful ideas and references. Special thanks go to Prof. Carol A. Newsom for generously sharing as yet unpublished work of hers on Job. My friend, Prof. Josef Stern, the renowned scholar of metaphor, kindly read the paper and raised some pertinent questions, to which I have only begun to respond in my modest revisions. I am indebted to the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, which provided me with ideal conditions in which to research and write the paper; and I am appreciative of my colleagues at the Institute who provided me with valuable references, feedback, and encouragement, especially Prof. W. Randall Garr, who in addition read the entire paper and made some corrections.

1. *Two conceptual models from the ancient Semitic world*

There are two dominant conceptual models (Ungerer and Schmid 1996: 43-55)² by which divine wisdom is represented in ancient Semitic cultures. In one model wisdom is located way up in the heavens, and in the other it is located in the depths of the earth, primarily in the subterranean sources of fresh water. In essence, these two models are interrelated, sharing at least two central features. On the one hand, wisdom is situated far from the reach of humanity; on the other, it is situated in realms where no mortals live but rather in the exclusive domain of gods.

Before going into each of the two models, it is important to my thesis to stress that, the limits of human reach both up in the sky and under the earth are typically linked in ancient Near Eastern literature and in the Bible (Greenspahn 1994; van Leeuwen 1997a; 1997b: 252). We thus read in the ancient Syrian recension of the Sumerian poem about the earliest rulers:

As heaven is remote—no hand can reach (there).

Like the depth of the netherworld—nothing is known.³

Similarly, we read in the Babylonian Dialogue between a Master and His Servant:

Who is so tall as to reach to heaven?

Who is so broad as to encompass the netherworld?⁴

We find virtually the same combination in Jer. 31:36:

² Cf. the concept of 'root metaphor' (Pepper 1942; cf. McFague 1982). On figuration as conception in general, see, e.g., Gibbs 1994; on conceptual models/paradigms as compared with and differentiated from metaphor, see, e.g., Barbour 1974. Whether the models being discussed here are closer to what we would regard as the literal or the metaphorical is a large and complex question of intellectual history that warrants a full consideration elsewhere. The conclusion to the present study (see §4 below) might suggest that, for at least some ancients, the conceptual models were more metaphorical than literal.

³ Cited in Klein 2000: 206, lines 7-8; cf. the Sippar version: "Like [the remote heavens], can my hand reach them? / Like the deep netherworld, no one knows them" (ibid.: 210, lines 16-17).

⁴ Lambert 1960: 148-49, lines 83-84; trans. Foster 1993: 817. Greenspahn (1994:34) follows Speiser (1967: 363) in interpreting this response by the servant as an expression of nonsense. I understand it as equivalent to saying, in reply to the question, "What, then, is good?", "I'm only human; I don't know."

If only the heavens above could be measured,
And the foundations of earth below examined.

The pairing of the heavens and the sea⁵ is found in Deut. 30:11-13:

For the commandment that I command you today is not too wondrous for you nor is it too remote from you. It is not in the sky, (such that you) would say: "Who will ascend to heaven and fetch it for us, and declare it to us so that we might perform it." Nor is it across the sea, (such that you) would say: "Who will cross the sea and fetch it for us and declare it to us so that we might perform it."⁶

The passage most pertinent to our study of Job 28 is, of course, from the speech of Zophar in Job 11:7-8:

הַחֶקֶר אֱלֹהֵי תִמְצָא / אִם עֲדַתְכִּלִּיחַ שְׂרֵי תִמְצָא ?
גִּבְהֵי שָׁמַיִם מִהֲחַפֵּעַל / עֵמְקָה מִשְׁאוֹל מִהֲתַדַּע ?

Can you reach the limit of God?
Can you reach the end of Shaddai?
How can you affect the highest heavens?
How can you know what is deeper than Sheol?

We shall be returning to this passage later on. Let us observe for now that the juxtaposition of the limits of God and the farthest reaches of heaven and the netherworld suggests a conceptualization of the divine as located at the uppermost and nethermost points in the cosmos. By implication, that is also where divine wisdom can be found.⁷

⁵ For the pairing of the sky (שָׁמַיִם) and the watery deep (תְּהוֹמוֹת) in Biblical literature, see, e.g., Tsumura 1988: 262-64.

⁶ Note the remarkable parallel in the 14th c. BCE Canaanite letter found at El Amarna: "Moreover, as far as we are concerned, it is to you that my eyes (are directed). Should we go up to the sky (*nīṭelli ana šamē* | *šamēma*), or should we go down into the netherworld (*nurrad ina eršete*), our head is in your hand" (EA 264: 13-19; trans. Moran 1992: 313).

⁷ For this motif in post-Biblical literature, see, e.g., Stone 1976.

1.1 *The heavenly, primarily solar, model*

In our ordinary experience, we perceive with greater visual clarity and intricacy when we approach the object of our contemplation. Similarly, we might grasp the secrets of heaven were we only close enough to sustain a proper view. Alas, the sky is too remote to see in detail with the unaided eye, and it is often obscured by darkness and clouds. Yet, the sky, in ancient cosmology—as well as in ordinary experience—covers everything, and it is partly by dint of its great compass that it serves as a figure for the sum of knowledge, of what is known and of what is knowable. The sky is also the site of the great orbs of light—the stars, the moon, and especially the sun. These natural lamps reveal and illumine, sometimes brilliantly, the otherwise obscure objects of the earth below. The sky, then, and the sun in particular, suggest, on the one hand, the remoteness of wisdom, and on the other, the fact that it can be revealed through illumination—wisdom is light.

It is therefore unsurprising that in the ancient Near East wisdom would be conceived as emanating from and characterizing the divine personality responsible for the sun, the sun-god. All the relevant aspects of the sun-god's functions as the overseer and illuminator of the earth find poetic expression in the Babylonian Hymn to Shamash.⁸ The sun's daily circuit across the sky conveys not only perpetual providence but also comprehensive extent:

Regularly and without cease you traverse the heavens,
Every day you pass over the broad earth (lines 27-28; trans. Lambert).
Your splendor envelops the distant mountains,
Your glare has filled all the lands (lines 19-20; trans. Foster).

The sun's scope is not only broad but, even more pertinently for our purposes, deep. The sun's rays not only illumine the world above ground (see line 33) and the surface of the water (lines 35-36), but they penetrate even to the depths of the sea:

⁸ Lambert 1960: 121-38; cf. Castellino 1976; Reiner 1985: 68-84; Foster 1993: 536-44. Analogous characterizations of the solar deity may be found in the famous Egyptian Hymn to the Aten, e.g.: "Thy rays encompass the lands to the limit of all that thou hast made. / As thou art Re, thou reachest to the end of them...."; "How manifold it is, what thou hast made! / They are hidden from the face (of man)" (trans. Wilson 1969; cf. Lichtheim 1976: 96-100).

Shamash, your glare reaches down into the subterranean sea (Apsû);
The deep-sea creatures behold your light (lines 37-38).

By virtue of his all-encompassing scope, the sun is said to know even the most arcane things:

Of all the lands whose languages are different,
You know their schemes, you observe their tracks (lines 49-50).

The same concept is expressed in the somewhat demythologized Psalm 19 (Geller 2002: 111-116; cf. Sarna 1993: 69-96), where nothing remains hidden from the sun (וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מִחִמְתּוֹ ; v. 7c) and where the Lord's teaching, in a metaphor with clear roots in mythology, brightens the eyes (מְאִירָה עֵינַיִם; v. 9b).

Shamash's knowledge of hidden things is so extensive that he controls divination and gives revelations (Shamash Hymn, lines 129, 134-35, 149, 151). His penetrating gaze makes him privy to sin and crime, into the evil that lurks in the hearts of mortals (lines 83-94; cf. Castellino 1976). His ability to expose the hidden—to investigate and prosecute, as it were—qualifies him to serve as the god of justice (cf. Reiner 1985: 68; Foster 1993: 536; Ryken 1998: 827). He is “a circumspect judge who pronounces just verdicts” (line 101; trans. Lambert). However, the sun-god Shamash, incorporating the manifold features of wisdom and judgment,⁹ does not remain on high in the heavens. Like all celestial bodies, in ancient Mesopotamian thought, at night he descends into the fresh-water subterranean sea, the Apsû, where he can receive additional data, from another master of knowledge, the god Enki (in Sumerian) or Ea (in Akkadian) (cf. Alster 1976: 16). It is not coincidental that Shamash is sometimes associated with Ea. Ea employs his inherent wisdom to create, and Shamash keeps a close eye on the created world that has been entrusted to him (Shamash Hymn line 24).

If we were to try to encapsulate (in propositions as well as metaphors) the various images connecting the sky and the sun in particular with esoteric wisdom in ancient Semitic cultures, using the model of concept-metaphors exemplified by Lakoff and Johnson (1980; cf. Lakoff 1987;

⁹ For all the above features of Shamash reflected in his diverse epithets, see Tallqvist 1938: 453-60.

Lakoff and Turner 1989), we might come up with something like the following:

Wisdom is as remote as the sky; it is in a divine realm.¹⁰

Knowledge can be revealed only by seeing with the scope of the sun—at all times, in all places, high and low.

Knowledge is light, ignorance is darkness.¹¹

Knowledge must penetrate, like the rays of the sun, exposing the hidden, bringing the obscure to light.

Justice is predicated on investigation, in illuminating that which is hidden in darkness.

1.2 *The model of depth*

Let us turn now to the second dominant cognitive model that functions to conceptualize and figure wisdom or knowledge in the ancient Near East. This second model, by virtue of its apparent presence in Ugaritic literature, is more prominent in the ancient Semitic cultures that were relatively proximate in time and place to ancient Israel; and, perhaps not by coincidence, it is even more pertinent to our study of the poem on wisdom in Job.

Wisdom is imaged as situated deep down beneath the surface of the earth, and especially in the subterranean sea and springs that lie below. The Sumerian god Enki, whose name ‘Lord Earth’ may refer to his presence deep inside the earth (cf. Bottéro 1992: 234),¹² and his Babylonian equivalent Ea, whose name may indicate ‘House (in the) Water’ or ‘Spouting Water’ (loc. cit.), are the preeminent Mesopotamian gods of wisdom and cunning, crafts and culture (cf. Bottéro 1992; Jacobsen 1976; Galter 1981). Ea is portrayed as both a creator and a sealer of fates. Among his many epithets are: ‘lord/king of wisdom’ (*bēl/šar nēmeqi*), indicating his role as the purveyor of knowledge, and ‘lord/king of the water-source’ (*bēl/šar naqbi*), indicating his imagined location in the

¹⁰ Compare the following line from the so-called Babylonian Theodicy; the friend tells the sufferer: “Divine purpose is as remote as innermost heaven” (line 256; Foster 1993: 812; cf. line 82).

¹¹ For the worldwide extent of the metaphor concept—understanding is seeing the light—see Fortescue 2001: 21.

¹² Jacobsen (1976: 111) prefers to derive the name from Enki’s husbandry of the soil.

underground sweet water (Tallqvist 1938: 289).¹³ It is universally assumed that the god depicted on cylinder seals, seated on a throne with fish-laden streams flowing fore and aft from his shoulders is Enki/Ea (e.g., Muscarella 1981: 84 with fig. 40; Leick 1991: fig. 39).

Mesopotamian lore also traces the seven primeval sages (*apkallū*) to the watery deep. In the bilingual Sumerian-Akkadian myth of their origins, they are depicted as fish, bred in rivers, and it is they who introduce the various components of culture to civilization (Reiner 1961). They are graphically portrayed in fish form. Note, for example, the fish-draped figurines from ancient Babylon, which were buried together in boxes of seven for ritual purposes (Woolley 1926: plate ix, fig. 1), making the connection with the seven *apkallu*'s virtually certain (Foster 1974: 349 with n. 21). In the Babylonian epic-type poem about the destructive god Erra, the seven *apkallu*-sages, described as fish, are explicitly compared to the wise god Ea (I 162).¹⁴ Finally, it is surely no coincidence that the mythological sage Adapa is made by Ea to be his fisherman. Foster (1974:350) once suggested that Adapa's "connection...with fishing was a...form of primacy: a recognition or recollection that an early alternative way of life in Mesopotamia to irrigation agriculture was fishing for the carp and other fish that teemed in the twin rivers and the marshes of the delta plain."

However, without altogether rejecting the attribution of the association of the sage Adapa with fresh water to a sort of collective cultural memory, one can rather appeal to the underlying concept-metaphor of the release of hidden knowledge as a welling up of subterranean water. Consider, for example, the unambiguous implication of the imagery used by the sufferer, complimenting his thoughtful interlocutor in the so-called Babylonian Theodicy (lines 23-24):

My friend, your mind is a wellspring of depth unplumbed,
The upsurging swell of the ocean that brooks no inadequacy.
(trans. Foster 1993: 807).

¹³ Cf. the references to Ea as *šar apsi bēl naqbi*, "King of the Apsu, lord of the water-source" in a Neo-Assyrian religious text (Livingstone 1986: 30-31 line 8). Ea is also responsible sometimes for supervising judicial procedures, but this may have more to do with his control of purifying water than with his well-known cunning (Jacobsen 1976: 112).

¹⁴ Text in Cagni 1969: 76; trans. in Cagni 1977: 34. The large fish-draped figure located at the entrance of a Neo-Assyrian temple (see fig. 1 in Izre'el 2001: 3), is also apparently an *apkallu* or *apkallu* type.

Knowledge arises from the deep water sources (expressed here by *naqbu*). Similarly, the first line of the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh, in characterizing the hero as one who wondrously obtained divine secrets, calls him “the one who has seen the source” (*naqbu*).¹⁵ In the Hellenistic history of Babylonia by the priest Berossus, Adapa—who is called there Oannes, which is derived from Sumerian Uanna—is said to hail from the sea (Izre’el 2001: 2-3). This tradition is authentic, for in a Babylonian scribal commentary Uanna is etymologized as follows: *u₄-an ù-tu-a-ab-ba*, “Uanna, born of the sea.”

Before proceeding to observe the ancient Semitic connection between wisdom and the deep, let us turn to the depiction of the wise god of Ugaritic mythology, whose residence is also situated where the water-sources meet.

The father of the Ugaritic pantheon, El (‘Ilu) is, as has been noted, the only Ugaritic god who is explicitly represented as ‘wise’ (*hkm*; Pope 1955: 42), and when another god exhibits a bit of his own wisdom, he is immediately compared to El:

The god El’s heard your word—it[’s] like El’s!

You have wisdom like Bull, the Gentle One (CAT 1.16 iv 1-2).¹⁶

Now although El, who is apparently the creator of humanity (de Moor 1980) and quite clearly the magical manufacturer of an artificial creature specially made to cure King Kirta (Margalit 1981), has earned his wisdom by living to old age (Pope 1955: 42-43), it is hardly coincidental that he is said to reside ‘at the source of the rivers’ // ‘at the fount of the two watery deeps’ (*mbk nhrm* // *apq thmtm*; cf. Hermann 1995: 529-30).

Some scholars have recently questioned whether El’s abode was within the watery deep or was rather in the remote distance, on the horizon (e.g., Pope 1994: 51) or at the axis mundi (e.g., Wyatt 1999: 533-34). It would appear, however, that El did indeed reside, at least in some descriptions, at the source of the underground springs. First, the Ugaritic word for water source, where El is said to live—*mabbiku*—is derived from *napku* (originally *nabku*, cognate to Akkadian *naqbu* or *nagbu*; cf.

¹⁵ For references and discussion of the apparent double meaning, see Greenstein 1998: 200-201 n. 3.

¹⁶ Trans. Greenstein 1997: 36. The study by Watson (2001), which may be pertinent to our discussion, is currently unavailable to me.

Kühne 1975: 260 n. 45),¹⁷ which denotes the fresh-water spring from which water is drawn (e.g., CAT 1.14 iii 9-10; v 1-2; Greenstein 1997: 16, 20). Second, one reaches El's abode by 'penetrating' it (Ugaritic *gly*; cf. Pope 1955: 65) and reaching an inner chamber. And third, El in many ways corresponds in his functions (creator, resolver of problems, sage), his demeanor (mild-mannered), and, yes, his general location (the water sources) to the Babylonian god Ea (Pope 1955: 43, 45, 71-72).¹⁸ It would make sense that El, like Ea, made a home in the watery deep. Corroboration may be found in Ezekiel's oracle concerning the Prince of Tyre, who is said to boast as follows: "I am El; I dwell in a god's dwelling in the heart of the seas" (Ezek. 28:2; cf., e.g. Hermann 1995: 529).¹⁹ Ezekiel also relates sarcastically to the Prince's wisdom, which is thought to be greater than that of the ancient Canaanite hero Danel (v. 3; cf. Day 1980). Here, too, we find an explicit nexus drawn between dwelling in the midst of the ocean and incomparable wisdom.

The conception of wisdom buried deep in the subterranean finds a direct linguistic expression in ancient Semitic. In Akkadian, where the Proto-Semitic root *'-m-q*, 'to be deep', shows up in the adjective *emqu*, the primary meaning of 'deep' is extended semantically to bear the sense of 'wise, skilled, educated, experienced, and wily' (CAD E, 151-52). The derived noun *nemequ* denotes nothing but 'wisdom'. The metaphorical association between wisdom and the watery deep is not lost but finds a clear expression in statements such as this from Hammurapi. In the prologue to his collection of laws, he describes himself, among other things as: *emqum muttabbilum ša ikšudu naqab uršim*, "The wise (literally, deep), the effective, who reached the source of wisdom" (iv 7-10).²⁰ In

¹⁷ For the phonological relationship between *napku* and *mabbiku*, see Kühne 1975: 259-60; Greenstein 1976: 51-52; Garr 1986. Not coincidentally, the Hebrew cognate of *mabbiku* (מַבְבִּיקוֹ), is employed in Job 28:11; the cognate of *napku* is employed in a similar context in Job 38:16, (נֹבֵכִי (ים)).

¹⁸ The Ugaritic crafts god, Kutharu wa-Khasisu, is also identified with Ea at Ugarit; see Lipinski 1988.

¹⁹ Greenberg (1997: 573) regards the identification of the Canaanite god El here with skepticism. He observes that the phrase "in the heart of the seas" reflects the notion that "godlikeness [is] remote [...] from human reach." As we have seen, however, the location of El's abode in the watery deep in the Canaanite-Hebrew tradition represents that very notion.

²⁰ Cf., e.g., Driver and Miles 1955: 11; contrast, e.g., Roth 1995: 79. It is tempting to connect *hkm*, 'wise', with *'mq*, 'deep', etymologically (via metathesis and minor phonological changes); if such an etymology were borne out, then the concept of wisdom would derive historically in Semitic from the metaphor: wisdom is depth. The establishment of such an etymology, however, would require a more extensive investigation.

Ugaritic as well, 'deep' can mean 'wise'. The goddess Anath reacts to a snide rejection by the arrogant young Aqhat by calling him, "the fairest, wisest of people" (CAT 1.17 vi 45). The term employed here for 'wise' or 'clever' (Parker 1997:62) is *'mq*, 'deep'.²¹

In Biblical Hebrew, we find the same cognitive association between 'deep' and 'wise'. In Ps. 92:6 we read:

מה גדלו מעשיך יהוה מאד עמקן מחשבתך

How great are your actions, O Lord,
Your thoughts are very deep.²²

The fact that 'deep' here, using the same Semitic root, *'-m-q*, that we encountered in Akkadian and Ugaritic, connotes 'wise' is made clear by comparing the near doublet of our verse in Ps. 104:24:

מה־גדלו מעשיך יהוה כלם בחכמה עשיה

How great are your actions, O Lord,
You perform them all in wisdom.

Compare also Ps. 64:7 (לב עמק, 'deep heart', or clever mind) as well as Qoh. 7:24.

The background of the Hebrew usage of 'deep' in the sense of 'wise' can be identified in the cultural model of the watery depths that we have described. The association finds expression in Prov. 20:5 "Deep water is the idea in a person's heart," מים עמקים עצה בלב איש.²³ The underlying concept is that thinking, and wisdom, are deep because they are hidden from view.²⁴ We find a remarkable expression of this metaphorical association in Isa. 29:15:

²¹ Contrast Lete and Sanmartín (1996: 80), who, with others, relate *'mq* here to Akkadian *emūqu*, 'strong'. Their interpretation misses both the poignancy and irony of Anath's discourse.

²² The nuance of עמק, 'deep', in Ps. 92:6 is missed by Dahood (1968: 336), who compares Ugaritic *'mq* in the putative sense of 'strength' (see n. 21 above).

²³ Commentators (e.g., Toy 1916: 384) miss the precise nuance, interpreting the metaphor of deep water to convey the difficulty of drawing it up.

²⁴ Cf. the following sequence of claims by Nabonidus (in his so-called 'Persian Verse Account'): *enqēk mūdāka ātamar ka[timta]*, "I am wise, I am knowledgeable, I have seen hid[den things]" (trans. Machinist and Tadmor 1993: 146 line 9').

הוי המעמיקים מיהרה לסחר עצה
והיה במחשך מעשיהם ויאמרו מי ראנו ומי יודענו

Ah, those who go deeply before the Lord, hiding their thoughts!

Their actions are in darkness, as they say:

“Who can see us? Who knows (what) we (are doing)?

Similarly, in describing (sarcastically) the wisdom of the Prince of Tyre, Ezekiel says that when it comes to ‘hidden’ or ‘obscure’ things (סְתוּרִים), “none can compare to him.” The deep is hidden and obscure. That is why, in the Bible, people who speak foreign languages are said to be שֹׁכֵה עֲמֻקִּי, ‘deep of language’ (Isa. 33:19; Ezek. 3:5,6), their speaking is obscure to the Hebrew listener (cf. Malul 2000:357).

The two models by which wisdom is conceptualized and figured in ancient Semitic are obviously interrelated. According to the second model, wisdom is hidden from human view and is hidden in the depths of the earth. According to the first model, a solar-like divine power can bring the hidden to light and illuminate its details. Both models underlie the poem on wisdom in Job 28.²⁵

2. *Where Job 28 belongs*

The poem on wisdom in Job is not generally understood today as the continuation of the speech attributed to Job in chapter 27 (e.g., Eissfeldt 1965: 463).²⁶ (The second part of chapter 27 is itself almost certainly not properly part of Job’s discourse, but rather the continuation of Bildad’s or part of the missing response of Zophar; see Hartley 1988: 355). It is most typically read as an autonomous piece. Many classify it as a hymn (e.g., Gordis 1978: 536-538; Hartley 1988: 26-27; Dell 1991: 196 n. 105; Zuckerman 1991: 88 and passim), but I find no hymnal features, such as an apostrophe or praising, in it. Others call it a meditation (e.g., Dhorme 1967: xcvi; Janzen 1985: 187), under the assumption that, unlike every

²⁵ The two models are sometimes combined in post-Biblical literature as well; e.g., “For from the source (מְקוֹר) of his wisdom he has opened (i.e., revealed) his light” (1 Q Serekh 10:3; cited in Rofé forthcoming).

²⁶ For interpretations of the speech as appropriate to Job, see, e.g., Driver 1956: 422; Childs 1979: 542-43; Janzen 1985: 187-88; Good 1990: 293; Whybray 1998: 21. It should be noted that each of these commentators begins with the assumption that the chapter is in a sensible place.

other discourse in the book (e.g., Westermann 1981: 135-36; Habel 1985: 392), it is spoken by an anonymous speaker. To explain its function in the book, in the midst of two discourses of Job with which it has no apparent continuity, commentators tend to turn to the field of music, borrowing such terms as 'interlude' (e.g., Andersen 1975: 222-223; Hartley 1988: 26; Crenshaw 1992: 863), 'intermezzo' (e.g., Westermann 1981: 137), and 'cadenza' (Hoffman 1995: 276). Clines (1989: lix) stands apart from most recent commentators by allowing that Job 28 may have "suffered some dislocation in the course of scribal transmission." It may be out of place.²⁷

With the mushrooming of synchronic literary study of the Bible in the past three decades, it has become virtually dogmatic to posit that the text lying before us is a unity that must be read as it is (cf. Greenstein 1989: 16-21, 29-62). Such an approach is appropriate when one is dealing with the question of whether to read a text with a literary history by analyzing its layers or stages and then taking the text apart through source criticism or whether to read the composite text before us as it was finally composed. The integrative approach is not, to my mind, appropriate, when one is dealing with a work whose pages or paragraphs have been accidentally disordered (cf. *ibid.*: 39 n. 44). We don't read the newspaper that way, when a paragraph is printed in the wrong place, and we don't read our students' papers that way, when the pages are assembled in the wrong sequence. If we are reading a book and the pages appear out of order, we read them in what we take to be the proper sequence. I don't think we should do any less when we read a Biblical text, so long as we can convince ourselves that we can reconstruct the proper order.

It will be my contention that Job 28 is only the second part of a larger discourse, spoken by one of the speakers in the book, and that the first part of the discourse can be located within the present text of Job. In fact, it is by assuming that the discourse on wisdom, as I shall now call it, employs not just one but both models by which wisdom is represented in ancient Semitic literature, that we can identify the beginning of the poem. Before doing that, however, I think it behooves us to consider two very serious philological problems that beset the presumption that Job 28 is 'self-contained', as Habel (1985: 392; cf. 393) has somewhat representatively put it.

²⁷ See now his article in the present volume.

2.1 *Linguistic considerations*

The first difficulty is that Job 28 begins with the particle ׀, which, as everyone knows, serves many functions. For the most part, it attaches a clause to a preceding one, by adding a condition or explanation (cf., e.g., Ehrlich 1913: 290). Accordingly, it is most of the time rendered ‘that’, ‘for’, ‘since’, or ‘because’. Those commentators who have discerned the problem at all explain the particle ׀ in Job 28:1 as ‘asseverative’, so that it can presumably begin a text and mean something like ‘Indeed’ or ‘Verily’ (e.g., Dhorme 1967: 399; Gordis 1978: 304; Hartley 1988: 373; Geller 1987: 177 n. 4).²⁸ The instances of asseverative ׀ in Biblical Hebrew are, contrary to popular belief, extremely rare. Of the approximately 20 examples that are enumerated in BDB (472b), most are more readily interpreted in the sense of ‘that’, ‘for’, or ‘when’.²⁹ Muraoka (1985: 158-164) makes a strong argument that most, if not all, putative examples of asseverative ׀—especially in clause-initial position—are actually demonstrative. One can hardly gainsay the cautious remarks of Driver and Gray (1921: 1.235): “ ‘Surely’ is a doubtful rendering of ׀: if the particle has its usual meaning, *for* or *because*, something obviously must have preceded it.”

In Biblical prose the particle ׀ not infrequently opens direct discourse—but only when it is preceded by a formula introducing speech (Miller 1996: 97-116). The only poem in the Bible beginning with ׀ that I can find is the oracle against Moab in Isaiah 15. There we have a double exclamation, each beginning with ׀. Skinner (1915: 133) suggests an asseverative function. The RSV and NRSV, however, understand ׀ to introduce a circumstantial clause:

Because Ar is laid waste in a night, Moab is undone;
Because Kir is laid waste in a night, Moab is undone (Isa. 15:1).

At most we can conclude that the hypothesis that ׀ in Job 28:1 begins a new poem is improbable. It runs against linguistic likelihood and is a consequence of the prior supposition that Job 28 is an independent poem.

A second, and far more serious, difficulty with the conventional readings of Job 28 as a self-contained poem is that the subject of v. 3 is con-

²⁸ The recent and pertinent study by Follingstad (2001) is currently unavailable to me.

²⁹ The few instances adduced by Waltke and O'Connor (1990: 665) are likewise ambiguous.

veyed by the inflection of a verb and by an independent pronoun alone. There is no antecedent. Let us look carefully at the verse:

קַץ שֵׁם לַחֹשֶׁךְ וּלְכָל-חִכְלִית הוּא חוֹקֵר

He puts an end to darkness, / And he probes to every extreme.

Who in this verse is 'he?' Nearly all modern commentators (with the notable exception of Tur-Sinai 1967) take the subject to be 'Man' (and tend to insinuate that word into their translations). From a linguistic perspective, such an interpretation might work for the inflection of the verb שָׂם, 'he put', which could theoretically be understood impersonally: 'one put'. However, that will not do for the independent pronoun הוּא, which must replace an explicit noun (Ehrlich 1913: 290; contrast, e.g., Fohrer 1963: 390; Strauss 2000: 131). The only seeming example of an independent pronoun preceding its nominal referent that is suggested in the study of participant references in Biblical Hebrew by De Regt (1999: 79-80) is from Job 31:4, where הוּא is said to refer to אֱלֹהִים, 'God', in v. 6. The example is at best weak. There is no reason that הוּא cannot refer to the antecedents אֱלֹהִים and שִׁדִּי in the preceding v. 2, applying the principle of 'global tracking' that De Regt himself presents at length.³⁰ The pronoun הוּא in Job 28:3 must follow an explicit antecedent, and that antecedent must be found in an earlier part of the discourse. That preceding text must exist elsewhere, and I shall maintain that that text may be found elsewhere in the book as we have it.

³⁰ In global tracking one follows various cues, both linguistic and associative, in order to disambiguate pronominal references in a discourse, even when other grammatically possible references intervene. Gordis (1978:304-305) enumerates several verses in Job in which a personal pronoun without antecedent allegedly initiates a new topic. I agree with Gordis, and others (e.g., Clines 1989: 209; Newsom 1996: 402-403) that in 8:16 הוּא refers to the flourishing righteous and not the rotting wicked described above. However, the exegesis is still controversial (see, e.g., Hartley 1988: 161-162), and I believe that a verse or phrase indicating the change in image has been accidentally dropped from our text (cf. Tur-Sinai 1967: 151). In 13:28 the reference of הוּא is problematic. Many remove the verse to a position following 14:2 (see, e.g., Newsom 1996:440). The LXX seems to read וְאֵנִי, "and I." It may well be that the reference is to the speaker (Job) himself and the sense is "So I am he..." (see, e.g., Hartley 1988: 226, 228). Such an understanding may be reflected in the Greek. Gordis's other examples are idiosyncratic.

2.2 *The subject in vv. 3-11*

Before proceeding to link chapter 28 with the text that, I believe, it more properly follows, let us consider the identity of the subject in 28:3, and in the verses that follow it, from a more thematic perspective. For lack of an explicit subject, nearly all moderns understand vv. 3-11 to describe the mining activities of human beings. It is striking, however, that one does not find in this passage a single verb or derived noun that refers to digging, excavating, or mining. I have in mind such verbs as כרה, 'to dig' (and note מלח מלח, 'salt mine or pit', in Zeph. 2:9), חצב, 'to hew out (of wood, metal, or stone)',³¹ חפר, 'to dig or explore', חחר, 'to tunnel', or כור, 'to bore or dig'. Moreover, all the paraphernalia of mining that crop up in the commentaries are only implicit, in the minds of the interpreters (Geller 1987: 158).³²

On the other hand, if one compares the diverse activities that are described in Job 28:3-11, one finds, as many commentators have indeed observed (e.g., Murphy 1981: 37; Habel 1985: 397; Geller 1987: 159; Newsom 1996: 530), that they are typically associated not with human subjects but with God. Let us examine some of these activities in detail.

Who is it who is known for "put(ting) an end to darkness" and "prob(ing) to the very extreme" (Job 28:3)? Nowhere are such terms used to describe human actions. In Isa. 42:16 the Lord asserts that he will be turning the darkness that envelops his people to light. The phrase that is used there, אשים מחשך, is very close to our לחשך. In Job 12:22, God is said to uncover those things that are deeply hidden (עמקות) from

³¹ See esp. Deut. 8:9, where it is used of copper.

³² For example, the reference in v. 3 to putting an end to darkness is commonly interpreted to relate the opening up of a mine shaft (see on this further below). The presence of the verb דלל, which can mean 'to hang', in v. 4, leads exegetes to extrapolate an entire scene of people lowering themselves into mines by rope, even in the absence of any word for mine or rope. And, as Andersen (1975: 225) remarks, "There is no evidence that *nahal* can mean a mining shaft." The verse is by all accounts difficult. I read and render it as follows: "He (God) breaks open streams...which are forgotten by travelers (when) they (the streams) get low (see Isa. 19:6) and change course (see Prov. 5:6) on people (for מן in the sense of לפני, see, e.g., Ps. 18:22)." For the reading נחלים, cf., e.g., Fohrer 1963: 390. An alternate rendering, closer to that of Geller (1987), which has been adopted by Newsom (1996: 530), is: "He (God) breaks open streams...which are unnoticed by travelers, devoid of people passing by." As for the crux גר מעם, which I have left untranslated, my best sense is that it is meant to function like מני רגל, something like 'streams without anyone nearby' (cf. Duhm 1897: 135; Hakham 1984: 210)—unless it is better emended to something like בצר(ים), 'through rock'.

darkness (מַגֵּר חֹשֶׁךְ). The use of the verb חָקַר, 'to probe', with respect to hidden things, is applied specifically to God, who probes into the secrets of the human heart (Jer. 17:10; Ps. 44:22; 139:1,23). In Prov. 25:2 חָקַר is employed as the antonym of הִסְתִּיר, 'to hide'. In Jer. 31:36, which was quoted above, it is implied that no one could probe (חָקַר) the foundations of the earth, only God ever could. The derived noun חִקְלִיָּה, which I have translated 'the extreme', occurs only five times in the Hebrew Bible, including thrice in Job (11:7; 26:10; and here in 28:3). In both Joban passages other than ours, the term is used in relation to God. In 11:7, within a discourse of Zophar's that is often compared to Job 28, the nouns חָקַר and חִקְלִיָּה describe the limits or depths of God (Eloah, Shaddai). In 26:10 we read:

חָק חָג עַל פְּנֵי מַיִם עַד חִקְלִיָּה אֹרֶךְ עִם חֹשֶׁךְ

He draws a circular border around the water's surface,
At the limit where light and darkness meet.

The actor who performs this delimiting of light, and of darkness, is, of course, the deity. Finally, in Job 38:19-20 the Lord challenges Job's knowledge of the 'path' (דֶּרֶךְ) of light and the 'site' (מָקוֹם) of darkness. Can Job carry the darkness to its 'boundary' (גְּבוּל)? Does he, Job, know the way to its 'home' (בֵּית)? No, of course not. Neither Job nor any other person could reach the limit of darkness, that role is exclusively God's (cf. Tur-Sinai 1967:396).

In Job 28:9b the actor is said to "overturn mountains from the root", הִפֵּךְ מִשְׁרֵשׁ הָרִים. Is this the sort of thing a person could do? The closest parallel is Job 9:5:

הַמַּעֲתִיק הָרִים וְלֹא יָדְעוּ אֲשֶׁר הִפְכָם בְּאַפּוֹ

The one who moves mountains with no one even knowing;
Who overturns them in his anger.

The subject of these activities reduplicating the wrenching events of creation is, of course, God.³³

³³ One may also compare the many verses referring to God's overturning of Sodom and Gomorrah (e.g., Deut. 29:22; Amos 4:11). On account of this association, the classical rabbis read Job 28 as alluding to that cataclysmic event; BT Sanhedrin 109a; Mekhilta,

In the same vein, Job 28:10 reads: *בצורות יארים בקע*, “he cleaved streams in the rocks (or mountains).” This statement recalls such verses as Hab. 3:9: *נהרות חבקע ארץ*, “You cleave open rivers in the land”; Ps. 74:15: *אחה בקעת מעין ונחל*, “You cleave open spring and stream”; Ps. 78:15: *יבקע צרים במדבר*, “He cleaves open rocks in the wilderness”; Ps. 114:8: *מים ההפכי הצור אגם־מים חלמיש למעינו*, “The one who turns the rock into a pool of water, / Hard stone into a spring of water”. The sum of these, and additional, references is that God split rock to give water to the Israelites in the wilderness, as God brought springs and rivers out of bedrock in creating the world. These acts may have pale reflections in certain human activities, but it seems to me highly doubtful than any Biblical author, even the iconoclastic poet of Job, would attribute the prerogatives of the divine creator to mere mortals. It is surely for this reason that ancient readers like the author of the Septuagint (see Hartley 1988: 27 n. 20) and the classical rabbis (see above, n. 33) and medieval Jewish exegetes (Saadia,³⁴ Rashi, Rashbam,³⁵ Ibn Ezra) understood that the subject in Job 28:3-11 is God.

2.3 *Job 28 as the continuation of Elihu's discourse*

From our linguistic perspective, we must ask (see 2.1 above), where is the antecedent reference to God in the text? My answer is that it is all there in the passage that, I maintain, preceded Job 28 before the pages of papyrus on which the ancient text was probably written (e.g., Blenkinsopp 1995: 21) were pasted together—or came apart and were recopied—out of sequence.³⁶ We have already cited the observation of scholars that as a meditation or reflection on wisdom, Job 28 ‘stands apart’ (Westermann) both generically and thematically from the rest of the book. The issues of theodicy and retribution that occupy the dialogues of Job in no way reverberate in the wisdom poem. Whybray (1998: 20) has noted that “the theme of wisdom provides a link between chapter 28 and the speeches of Elihu.” In fact, one can, and I shall, argue

Beshallah, Shirta 2 (ed. Horovitz-Rabin, p. 122).

³⁴ Goodman 1988: 331.

³⁵ Cf. Japhet 1997.

³⁶ Greenberg (1987:294) explains what might have led an ancient redactor to place Job 28 in its present position. The reference to silver in 28:1 recalls the wicked person's loss of silver in 27:16-17; and the theme of what belongs to God (cf. 27:11) would seem to be shared in a general way.

that Job 28 is the direct continuation of the last of Elihu's discourses, rounding out the series of lectures that comprise the lengthy and repetitive speeches of Elihu.³⁷

The Elihu speeches have a dual purpose. The first is to convince the three senior friends of Job that they do not possess true wisdom (חכמה) by virtue of their superior age (see 32:10). They have not succeeded in overcoming Job's arguments; they have no basis for claiming "we have found (or arrived at) wisdom", מצאנו חכמה (32:14). Elihu's second purpose is to answer Job, to convince him to turn to God for succor. This he will impress upon Job with his own 'wisdom', "be silent, and I will teach you wisdom", החרש ואאלפך חכמה (33:33).

Wisdom, who has it and what it is, is at the very core of Elihu's argument. God, like the Babylonian sun deity Shamash, maintains proper justice in the world, for he sees all, there is no place to hide (34:21-22):

For his eyes are upon the ways of a man, / all his steps he sees.

There is no darkness, no deep-darkness, / where evildoers can hide.

As a solar deity type, God is in heaven; but as the sole deity, God has total control of the sky and winds. Remaining in the sky, as it were, Elihu confronts Job in his last discourse to turn his eyes heavenward and take note. The final discourse begins with a new address to Job in 37:14:

האזינה זאת אירב עמר והתבונן נפלאות אל

Give ear to this, O Job; / Stand and pay heed to the wonders of God!

The argument begins in the sky, dwelling primarily on the first conceptual model of wisdom I described above, where wisdom is that which is known only to the deity who observes the full compass of the earth from above and can discern its hidden details by dint of his illuminating vision. In a series of questions that anticipate in form and content the divine speeches from the whirlwind in chapter 38, Elihu challenges Job's knowledge of what is on high. Since God's vantage of omniscient vision pene-

³⁷ Cf. the serendipitous article by Clines in this volume. This is not the place to discuss the originality of the Elihu speeches. Let me only say, in brief, that I share the view of Newsom (1996: 321-322, 558-559; forthcoming) that the Elihu speeches were composed in a Joban style as an ancient reader's response to the earlier form of the book with the effect of giving the God speeches and the book as a whole a more pious 'spin.'

trates everything and everyone below, Elihu asks rhetorically whether God needs to be informed in order to know when a person speaks or even swallows (37:20).³⁸ God from his heavenly perch knows all. We humans, by contrast, have nothing to say about atmospheric phenomena because we are in the dark (37:19).³⁹ God may be remote in heaven, but his vision is not impaired. He can clear the clouds from the sky with a wind (37:21-22).⁴⁰ God is super-powerful, and, like the solar deity Shamash (see §1.1 above), he will maintain and never pervert justice (שְׁגִיאוֹ-כֶּחַ וּמִשְׁפָּט 37:23). This, explains Elihu, is why God is universally held in awe, לִכְן יִרְאוּהוּ אֲנָשִׁים (37:24). That is the conclusion of part one of the discourse, with its focus on God looking down from heaven. Fear of God is the upshot.

2.4 Linguistic linkages between Job 37 and 28

The discourse continues, I maintain, in Job 28. The poem is somewhat complex and may, in fact, be patterned on a pre-existing poem (cf., e.g., Tur-Sinai 1967: 395). However, the lexical linkages between 37:14-24 and chapter 28 are many, providing linguistic coherence to the argument (cf. in general Berlin 1989; van Wolde 1998). These include, among the more prominent examples: the root בִּין, ‘comprehend’ (37:14; 28:12,20,28); the verbal adjectives יִצוֹק / מוֹצֵק, ‘solid’/ ‘smelted’ (37:18; 28:2); the verb עָרַךְ, ‘arrange, assess’ (37:19; 28:17,19),⁴¹ the *pi’el* verb סָפַר, ‘to relate, to take account’ (37:20; 28:27),⁴² as well as more common terms like ‘light’ (אֹר), ‘darkness’ (חֹשֶׁךְ), ‘wind’ (רוּחַ), and ‘know’ (יָדַע).

The poem begins, as we have seen, with the particle כִּי, “for (there is a ground-source for silver and a site for the gold that is refined)” (28:1).

³⁸ I would render the verse: “Need he (God) be told when I speak? Need a person say (it to him) when one swallows?” Swallowing is a barely perceptible act; see Job 7:19.

³⁹ As several commentators (e.g., Dhorme 1967: 570) observe, the locution לֹא נַעֲרַךְ, “we do (or can) not set,” is elliptical for לֹא נַעֲרַךְ מִלִּים, “we do (or can) not set forth words” (see 32:14).

⁴⁰ Elihu seems here to respond to Job’s contention that God seals off his vision of humanity below (see 3:33; 21:22; cf. Eliphaz’s paraphrase in 22:13-14).

⁴¹ I exclude here the apparent noun עָרַךְ in 28:13, as I share the widespread opinion, supported by the LXX as well as the collocation with מְקוֹם, ‘place’, in v. 12, that דֶּרֶךְ, ‘way’, is to be read instead.

⁴² The *pi’el* of סָפַר as employed in 28:27 refers to the surveying or assessing of wisdom; compare the usage in Job 38:37 (cf. Geller 1987: 182 n. 32).

One may wonder if a sentence beginning with כִּי may follow what I claim to be the preceding sentence, v. 37:24, which begins with לִכֵּן, 'thus' or 'therefore'. In fact this pattern occurs one other time in the Hebrew Bible, and it so happens that it is in an earlier part of Elihu's discourse, in 34:10-11:

Therefore (לִכֵּן), O people who possess a mind, listen to me:
Far be God from wickedness, or Shaddai from corruption;
For (כִּי) he requites a person according to his deeds,
According to one's ways does he endow one.

From a rhetorical perspective, 28:1 would appear, then, to connect to 37:24. Moreover, the subject that we would expect for the activities related in 28:3-11 on the basis of sense and intra-Biblical parallels, namely, God, is explicitly mentioned toward the end of chapter 37, in vv. 22 (אֱלֹהִים) and 23 (שׁוֹרֵץ), and God continues to be referenced by the inflection of verbs and pronominal suffixes through the balance of the chapter.⁴³

3. *A reading of Job 28*

What, then, is the continuation of the argument that Elihu begins in 37:14 and completes in chapter 28? The first section of chapter 28 (vv. 1-2) describes the fact that precious metals have known find spots, accessible to humans. The brief section introduces the motif of the precious materials that people mine and trade, which will be picked up and developed according to an attested wisdom motif below, in vv. 15-19 (cf., e.g., Zuckerman 1991:141; Whybray 1998: 123). The full force of the motif will become clear only below: people know where precious metals can be found but they do not know where to find something that is even more valuable: wisdom!⁴⁴

⁴³ Note, too, that the divine name אֱלֹהִים, apart from its occasional use in the frame-tale and in the phrase בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים denoting angels, appears in Job only in 5:8 (Eliphaz), 20:29 (Zophar), 32:2 (Elihu), 34:9 (Elihu), and 28:23. The fact that two of the four attestations outside chap. 28 occur in the Elihu material surely strengthens our attribution of chap. 28 to the Elihu discourses.

⁴⁴ The following verses do not describe the human search for subterranean treasures but rather the divine feats by which the ordinarily unexposed is brought to light (see §2.2 above). The verses that begin chap. 28 set up a foil to the question of where wisdom can be

The second dominant cognitive model we have discussed, according to which wisdom is hidden beneath the visible earth, is focal in what follows. In contrast to the silver and gold that are extracted from regions near the surface of the earth, God can probe beyond the dark, hidden regions (v. 3). God brings up streams from the subterranean fresh-water sea, even though they must burst through solid rock (v. 4),⁴⁵ and can overturn the ground, exposing the fiery stratum beneath (v. 5). The precious jewels lying deep in the earth are in God's domain (v. 6). Reintroducing the metaphor concept of God being able to see what is far below from way on high, the poet reminds us that God's vision penetrates to areas that even the sharpest-eyed fowl cannot perceive and into which even the lowest-crawling reptile cannot slither (vv. 7-8). God, to recapitulate—but in even more resonant Biblical language (see §2.2 above)—can cause upheavals in mountainous rock, bringing the deepest water sources to the surface and the most deeply buried stones to light (vv. 9-11).

It is at this point that the rhetorical question, or riddle, is posed: "Where can wisdom be found?" (v. 12). Some scholars have proposed to emend the verb 'to be found' (חמצא) to חצא, 'to be extracted', because they think that the topic is mining (cf., e.g., Geller 1987: 181 n. 20); but I have argued (see §2.2 above) that it is not. The topic, which, as we have seen, is introduced near the beginning of Elihu's speeches, is: where is wisdom, and what is it? Is it found in Job's senior companions? Have they 'found' it? Perhaps, in accord with the widespread ancient Semitic conception we have discussed, it is found deep in the earth or below it in the water sources?

No, says Elihu—or the poet he may be drawing from—it is not located down below. It is naturally unknown in the land of the living (v. 13). And it is not found beneath that land either. The watery deep, תהום, where the Ugaritic father god El lives, has not encountered wisdom down there (v. 14). Nor can one use the precious metals and stones that have been mentioned above to trade for wisdom (vv. 15-19). It cannot be acquired by transaction any more than it can be located physically. Here we find a wisdom topos or cliché known also from the Book of Proverbs

found (v. 12) as well as proleptically setting up the contrast between precious stones and metals, which humans seek and sometimes find, because they are so valuable to them, and wisdom, which people cannot find, because it is not located on the earth or even underground (see below) but which they ought to desire far more than earthly treasures.

⁴⁵ For a rendering of the verse, see n. 32 above.

(3:14-15; 8:10-11), but the motif is here integrated with the metaphor concept of wisdom being situated in the hidden world below us. Another rhetorical question insists, it cannot be found (v. 20).

The poet returns to the theme of wisdom not being where the widespread conception places it, in the underneath. Above, it is said that wisdom is not in the subterranean water. Now it will be said that wisdom is not in the netherworld, the land of the dead (vv. 21-22).⁴⁶ There one only hears about it. Rather, God, who possesses the capabilities of the sun god who sees and penetrates into all that is hidden, can see to the bottom of the earth as well, and it is therefore he alone who knows where wisdom is located (vv. 23-24; cf. Habel 1985: 399). The surprise, astonishing on account of the subtle, almost nonchalant way it is conveyed, is that God knows wisdom because he employed it in measuring the wind and the water, he observed it and probed it 'then' (אָדָּם), when he created the world in the first place (vv. 25-27) (cf., e.g., Dhorme 1967: li; Geller 1987: 166; Newsom 1996: 533). Wisdom is not located in a place but is rather situated in time, bound up in the primordial act of creation and in the divine wisdom that can be recognized in the created world. Habel (1985:400) discerns here another lovely nuance, further integrating the poem: the delicate observation and calibration of wisdom that God performs is analogous to the care the jeweler takes in examining and weighing a stone.⁴⁷ But the answer to the question of where wisdom can be found is given: it is a quality of what God has done in arranging the world. It is not located in any place.

That, however, leaves one more question to be answered: what, then, is wisdom for a person? It isn't what the friends of Job have offered. It isn't what Job has been displaying. Rather, it is found in the last verse of

⁴⁶ The use of indefinite מוֹת, 'Death', alongside אֲבִדוֹן, 'Perdition', suggests the Canaanite god Mot, a major character in Ugaritic mythology (cf., e.g., Pope 1965: 135-36; Habel 1985: 398-99; Whybray 1998: 123).

⁴⁷ V. 27 may be more precisely rendered: "Then (at that time) he (God) saw it (wisdom) and took account of it; he measured it, yea, assessed it." For סָפַר, 'to take account', see §2.4 above (and cf. Whybray 1998:124); for הָכִין, 'to measure', see, e.g., Deut. 19:3; for חָקַק, 'to assess', see 1 Kgs. 7:47.

the poem, which is something of a reprise of 37:24.⁴⁸ Holding God⁴⁹ in awe, fearing God and shunning evil⁵⁰, that is wisdom. It isn't something one can use but something one can be.

4. *Nothing new under the sun*

Westermann (1981:137) regards this conclusion as a 'revolutionary thesis'. It is true that Job 28, with or without the discourse of Elihu's beginning in chapter 37, sort of deconstructs the metaphor concept that wisdom is hidden deep below the surface of the earth and sea. Such a thesis is not so new, however.

The fact that wisdom is conceptualized and figured in ancient Near Eastern literature as that which is deeply hidden in the earth or remote and inaccessible in the highest heaven does not mean that serious people took those conceptions literally. It would seem that the opposite is the case. In the Babylonian myth of Adapa, the human hero reaches the heavenly abode of the sky-god Anu. Anu gives him something of a tour of the place. It is made clear, however, that the divine secrets that Adapa procures he receives as a special revelation from Anu (cf. Izre'el 2001: 116). Being up with the gods in the sky is not sufficient to access wisdom. It is a matter of divine will; and the gods are very selective about what they disclose. Similarly, Gilgamesh is said to have reached the hidden sources of the earth. And he does acquire secret knowledge of the world from antediluvian times. But he accessed that knowledge not by human or superhuman feats of skill or perception. He learns the divine secrets from a sympathetic immortal human, Utanapishtim, who tells him about the Great Flood and why it happened (cf. Greenstein 1998).

Not only that: in the twelfth tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic, an Akkadian translation of part of the Sumerian composition about the return of Enkidu from the netherworld, Gilgamesh interviews his friend about

⁴⁸ Cf. Andersen's (1975: 268) comment on 37:24: "We have come full circle to Job 28:28."

⁴⁹ The use of the divine name 'יְהוָה, 'Lord', in 28:28 is unique in Job (see, e.g., Gordis 1978: 538-39). This, together with the Proverbs-like theology of the verse, lead many commentators to regard it as secondary (see, e.g., Zuckerman 1991: 138). The strange employment of 'יְהוָה here may, however, serve to call attention to the lesson in the verse, which caps off the entire discourse of Elihu, as I have suggested.

⁵⁰ Many commentators observe that the language of this verse harks back to 1:1 and may, accordingly, have been tailor-made as a conclusion to Elihu's speech.

what he saw there (see, e.g., Foster 2001: 129-143). Even though Enkidu was privileged to experience the domain of the dead and to witness what goes on there, the information that he has to report is far from the secrets of creation or any form of divine wisdom. He is able to answer Gilgamesh's questions about the types of dead people and their various fates down under. That is all.

In the end Elihu, for all his bluster, has nothing really new to say to Job. He advises him to preserve his piety and avoid wrongdoing. It was precisely this that Job was advised by Eliphaz at the beginning of the discussions.

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THE IMPLICATIONS OF GOD DISCOVERING WISDOM IN EARTH

Norman Habel

Introduction

One of Umberto Eco's most recent works is called *Kant and the Platypus*. The title cannot but attract the eye of an Australian academic, especially one who was born and bred where platypus swim. The platypus, it seems, defied classification by the best scientific minds of the 18th century. After a stuffed platypus arrived in London in 1799,

George Shaw betrayed various signs of amazement and puzzlement: at first he thought the duck's beak had been grafted on the head of a quadruped. The use of 'graft' was no accident. The skin had arrived after crossing the Indian Ocean, and it was known at the time that certain diabolical Chinese taxidermists were extremely good at grafting, for example, fish tails on monkeys' bodies in order to create mermaid-like monsters...His reaction was interesting: the animal was unknown; he had no way of recognizing it, and he would have preferred to believe it did not exist. In order to understand what was before his eyes, he tried right away to classify it. (Eco 2000: 242)

So did many other scientists. Was it a fish, a bird, a quadruped, a mammal without nipples? In 1800 the German Blumenbach named it *Ornithorhynchus Paradoxus*. *Paradoxus* indeed! For eighty years naturalists could agree on nothing except that they were talking about *that* creature and that it *had* to be classified.

Classification, it was assumed—perhaps rightly—is one of the cognitive processes common to all humans. The compulsion to classify, however, seems to have been typical of the scientific mindset of the 18th and 19th century. Today, it is estimated, there are some 10,000 active taxonomists worldwide seeking to classify 10 million or so living things still undiscovered (*The Australian* March 6, 2002: 34).

My aim in this study is to examine some of the relevant cognitive processes recorded in Old Testament Wisdom literature, paying special attention to certain forms of classification, including the 'platypus' like phenomenon of Wisdom. The results of this research will, I hope, throw new light on God's discovery of wisdom in Job 28 and the possible significance of this phenomenon for an understanding the role of Earth depicted in this section of the Book of Job.

Seeing, searching, connecting

To appreciate the process of God discovering wisdom, we first need to identify those elements of the cognitive process of discovery reflected in some of the key Wisdom texts of the Old Testament. From the outset, however, we need to recognise that cognitive processes mentioned in these texts may not be described according to the language of modern cognitive theorists. Moreover, most biblical Wisdom Literature assumes forms of knowledge that reflect the **result** of these processes, rather than the processes themselves. Novices are generally enjoined to learn and live by the distilled truths of past experience and observation, rather than follow designated steps to discover the truth for themselves. Thus the sages reiterate the accepted axiom that:

Like vinegar on a wound
is one who sings songs to a heavy heart. (Prov. 25:20)
and
Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment stink,
so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honour. (Eccles. 10:1)

Similarly in Babylonian wisdom literature:

Intercourse brings on lactation
and
Last year I ate garlic; this year my stomach burns. (Lambert 1960: 247.249)

Although the truth of the axiom is taken for granted, it is clear that its validity is dependent upon years of observations and reflection from the past. Interspersed among these traditional proverbs, however, a number

of learning steps can be identified, steps that seem to reflect cognitive processes described by sages of old.

The first of these steps is 'seeing', registering observable information. The eyes may indeed be the neural pathway to the brain, but for the wise of old seeing with the eyes is often shorthand for a series of cognitive processes initiated by the act of 'seeing'. Note the colourful injunction:

Go to the ant, you sluggard,
see its ways and be wise. (Prov. 6:7)

The cognitive process that leads to this piece of human wisdom begins by observing, 'seeing' ants. The technical term here is the common verb *rā'āh*, to see something with the eyes, a normal activity of any human. Once the observer in this injunction reaches the appropriate location, presumably an ants' nest, he/she will be able to 'see' ants.

The seeing, however, involves more than registering some information about ants. The seeing is to include a searching of all that is observed to discriminate, distinguish and identify the way or ways of the ant. There is something distinctive about what ants are and do that must be discovered by the observer. This searching process, which is elsewhere associated with the verb *bîn*, is here subsumed under the process of seeing.

The way of the ant, the distinctive characteristic of being an ant, is not to be isolated as information that is valuable in and of itself. This is not an exercise in biological science. The ant, per se, is not the object of the exercise. The observer has to make a connection with known information from a totally different realm of knowledge. The way of ants is to be connected with certain human behaviour, a cognitive process that would involve a range of neural leaps or connections. Listen to what we should learn from ant behaviour.

Go to the ant, you sluggard,
See its ways and be wise.
Without having any chief
Or officer or ruler,
It prepares its food in summer
And gathers its sustenance in harvest,
How long will you lie there, O sluggard?
When will you rise from your sleep?

There is, of course, a delightful irony in this injunction. The sleeping sluggard is unlikely to observe the ways of ants during the course of a summer. The connections being made are, at a minimum, with general knowledge about the harvesting habits of ants, the structures of human society, and the moral values associated with laziness.

bîn – to discriminate/distinguish/identify

The process of seeing, searching and connecting that I have identified as basic to the wisdom of ancient sages in Proverbs, demands further analysis. A key term in this process, it seems to me, is the verb *bîn*, which is regularly translated ‘discern’. A close analysis of this verb in Wisdom texts reveals several stages in a cognitive process rather than a single act.

Consider the claim of Job under attack from his so-called friends:

Is there any deceit on my tongue?

Can my palate not **discern** (*bîn*) misfortune? (Job 6:30)

Job’s palate, which is here a metaphor for his mind, has the capacity to consider a range of possible tastes and identify the correct taste. Job has the mental capacity to discriminate, to distinguish one kind of event from another; he can discern the difference between misfortune and divine punishment.

The process involved in the verb *bîn* usually follows the act of ‘seeing’ (*rā’āh*). The observer sees or perceives and then discriminates or distinguishes a given phenomenon. As in the following proverbs:

I looked/saw (*rā’āh*) among the simple ones

And identified (*bîn*) from among the youths, a lad without *lēb*. (Prov. 7:7)

The person with the cognitive skills of discrimination can identify the young person who still lacks those skills, or as the text says ‘lacks *lēb*’. This expression, ‘lacking *lēb*’ is a common idiom to describe the person whose intellectual skills have not been adequately developed to possess wisdom. The expression is rendered inadequately in the RSV as ‘lacks sense’ (Prov. 6:32; 9:4). Interestingly, when *lēb* is used in relation to the

development of one's critical skills (by exercising *bîn*) the translation may be 'intelligence' (Prov. 8:5). The person who 'lacks *lēb*' is the opposite of a person who has developed critical understanding or intelligence (Prov. 15:21).

We now pause to reflect on what is perhaps the supreme irony of this exercise. We are comparing the cognitive processes that contemporary researchers identify as taking place within the human brain and what seems to be the understanding of cognitive processes among the ancient sages of the Bible. The paradox is that we are comparing two different organs of the human anatomy: the brain and the heart. In the Old Testament (and much of the New Testament), the heart is the organ where cognitive processes are believed to take place. People thought with their heart, pondered things in their heart, discerned truth with their heart. The truly astute person is 'wise of heart', (Prov. 10:8). In contemporary jargon, we might call the person 'lacking *lēb*' as someone who has 'no brains', or more precisely 'no critical skills'.

Our comparative exercise is worth pursuing, however, because cognitive processes were discerned by the sages of old, even if they located them in a different part of the human anatomy.

The process implied by using the verb *bîn* is the process of mentally searching a range of options to isolate or distinguish the correct option and identify it. Such a person is 'clever' (*'arum*), like the snake in Eden, the opposite of the gullible person who believes everything. As the following proverbs illustrate:

The simple believe every word they hear.

But the clever distinguish (*bîn*) their path. (Prov. 14:15)

The clever have the wisdom to distinguish (*bîn*) their way (*derek*).

The folly of fools misleads. (Prov. 14:8)

Bîn, I would suggest, involves the process of distinguishing truth from error, right from wrong, wisdom from folly. As these two proverbs indicate the task is more specifically to identify the genuine 'way' (*derek*) or path.

derek – the way of things

The range of possible phenomena that one might seek, search, distinguish and identify using one's *bîn* capacity, is theoretically endless. In practice, a primary goal of the Hebrew sage was to identify the *derek*, the way, of any given phenomenon.

In 1972, I explored the imagery of the way in an article entitled 'The Symbolism of Wisdom in Proverbs 1-9' (Habel 1972). In that article I focused on the pattern of two ways, the way of wisdom and the way of folly. These two ways correspond to two hearts, or to be more precise in our context, two minds, the mind of the wise and the mind of the foolish. The two ways were understood to be the two pathways or roads of destiny that humans could follow through life.

I now realise, especially through my study of Job, that there is another understanding of *derek* that does not focus on a way as a path between two points. The imagery is not primarily that of a journey, travel or direction.

In this usage, *derek* refers to the driving characteristic of a given entity. Perhaps the German equivalent from Kant, a term used by scientists seeking to classify creatures such as the platypus, is the term *bildende Kraft*. Every produce of nature, according to Kant, has its *bildende Kraft*, its own inner formative force, or as I suggest, driving characteristic (Eco 2000: 93). This concept of *derek* is crucial, I believe, for an understanding of the created order of things in Job 28.

Frequently the term way is associated with the characteristic orientation of groups in society, such as 'the way of the lazy' (Prov. 15:19), 'the way of the adulteress' (Prov. 30:20) and 'the way of the perverse' (Prov. 22:5). In other contexts, the focus is on 'the way of Wisdom' (Prov. 4:11) or 'the way of critical insight' (Prov. 9:6). Sometimes 'the way' seems to be shorthand for wisdom itself:

Listen, my child and be wise;

Direct your mind (*lêb*) in the way (*derek*). (Prov. 23:19)

Especially significant for our analysis here, is the association of *derek* with natural (non-human) phenomena. We recall the famous lines:

Three things are too wonderful for me;

Four I do not understand:

The way of an eagle in the sky,
 The way of a snake on a rock,
 The way of a ship on the high seas,
 And the way of a man with a young woman. (Prov. 30:18-19)

The eagle has a way that is distinctive to the eagle, a way that is evident as it flies in the sky. Yet, that way remains a marvel and a mystery, something distinctive located within the eagle. Each of the phenomena that follows also has an innate way that characterises it and makes it mysterious.

Here we are reminded of the injunction about the ant that we discussed earlier. The ant, too, has a way or ways that reflect the nature of ants. The injunction to the would-be sage is to analyse the ant and thereby discover its 'way'. The person who can identify the driving force that is typical of ants gains wisdom, at least in one area of life.

Job 38-39 – codes in creation

When God confronts Job from the whirlwind he does not challenge Job's capacity to think about the disasters of life that have befallen him or his general knowledge about the created world. Rather, he challenges his critical capacity to grasp the underlying blue print or design (*'ēṣā*) of creation (Job 38:2), a task that requires insight and wisdom (Habel 1992: 34). The very first challenge, one that focuses on Earth, makes it clear that God is questioning Job's critical cognitive capacity, his *bînā*:

Were you there when I laid Earth's foundations,
 Tell me if your knowledge includes discernment (*bînā*). (Job 38:4)

With each of the components of creation that God introduces, there is a challenge to identify or locate what is equivalent to its inner structural identity, its governing feature. In relation to Earth that determining feature is its hidden foundations, all meticulously measured and set in place (38:4-6). The sea has a specific statute or law (*hōq*) that determines and fixes its place in the order of things (38:10). The dawn has a specific place (*māqôm*) assigned to it (38:12). Darkness, too, has a place, a house on Earth (38:19). Thus everything has its assigned *locus* in creation.

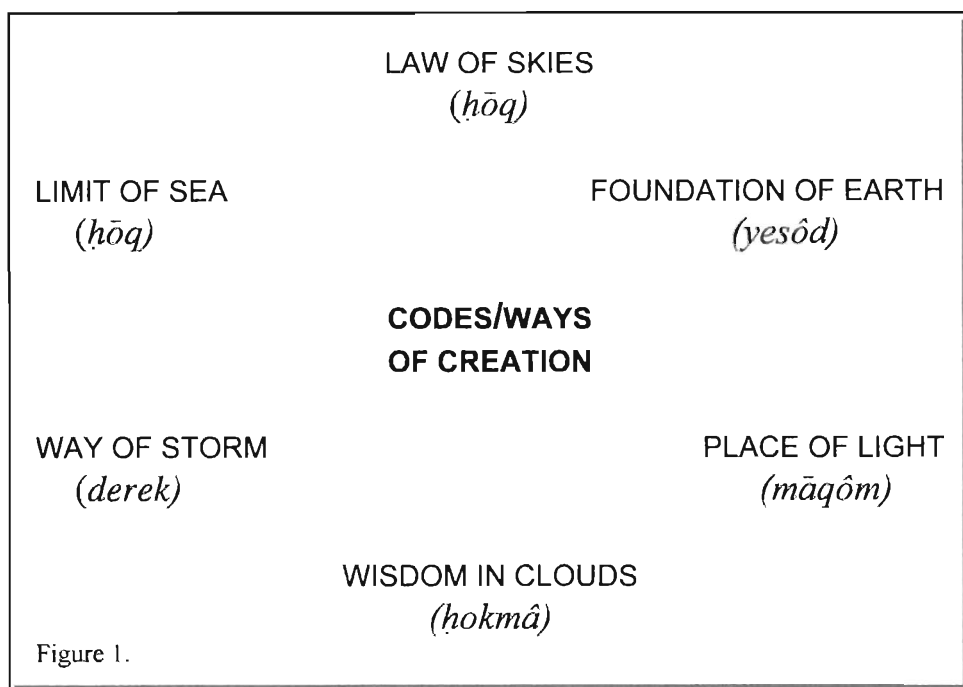
Another way of expressing this concept of the determined dimension of things is to speak of their 'way'. Job is challenged to identify the way of lightning when it flashes and the way of the thunderstorm (38:24-25). He is also challenged to discern the 'laws' (*huqqim*) of the sky as well as the order of Earth (38:33). The 'law' inherent in something is parallel to the 'way' of something. In contemporary terms, we could say that according to Job 38 everything has its own inner code.

And as if to raise the intellectual stakes to another level, the last challenge in relation to the inanimate domains of creation, is for Job to find something even more elusive: wisdom. 'Who put wisdom in the cloud canopy?' (38:36) The inner code of the clouds is designated its wisdom!

Consider the range of features that Job is challenged to discover by exercising his critical cognitive skills: the hidden meticulously measured foundations of Earth, the inner law that controls the boundaries of the sea, the laws that govern how the sky functions, the unseen place where Dawn resides, the way that characterises thunder and lightning and finally the wisdom in the clouds. **It is not the phenomena themselves, but the inner mystery or code of these phenomena that Job is challenged to discern, a code which itself can be called 'wisdom'.**

The physical universe, it seems, is a complex of components, each of which has a distinctive 'law', 'way', 'place' or 'dimension' that characterises it in relation to the rest of the cosmos. Ultimately, this mysterious distinctive feature can also be designated the wisdom in that thing itself. All the phenomena of Earth, it seems, have wisdom within them; wisdom is not only something humans acquire by observing nature. It also seems to be something imbedded in creation that humans are challenged to discover in nature. This web of inner 'ways' or codes in creation can perhaps be expressed diagrammatically as a Web of Wisdom (Figure 1).

Wisdom in biblical Wisdom Literature, therefore, seems to represent two discrete poles—the wisdom of the human being and the wisdom inherent in a given domain that the human being is analysing. Contemporary cognitive psychologists seem to focus exclusively on various understandings of the former mode of wisdom and ignore the latter. While criticising the traditional understanding of wisdom as a way of knowing that deals with 'enduring universal truths', recent cognitive scientists nevertheless recognise an 'underlying emphasis on the value of holistic cognitive processes that move beyond a fragmented and impassive relativity, toward a more 'universal' or metasystemic awareness of interre-



lated systems' (Csikszentmihalyi 1990: 31). The task of analysing the biblical understanding of Wisdom in the light of this definition is a task for the future.

Classification

It has been argued that the phenomena identified, both inanimate and animate, in the Book of Job, according to their respective codes, are an ancient mode of classification or categorisation. Almost 50 years ago, Gerhard von Rad compared the phenomena listed in Job 38-39 with the famous Onomastica of Amenope in Egypt, (1955: 281-291). He considered the 'ancient compendium of all that Ptah created' as a helpful model in his search for the form-critical nature of Job 38-39.

While one can extract a list of phenomena from the poetic reflection in Job 38-39, there is no apparent order to this list and no obvious correspondence to the list of onomastica from Amenope. Moreover, I find it unlikely that Wisdom writers,

Well-versed in all kinds of learned literature, had the comparatively easy task of going through this long-established scheme of current

scientific learning, and putting into poetry the somewhat prosaic tabulations (von Rad 1955: 285).

For me, the profound poetic reflection, the deep theological analysis and the unique focus on probing the hidden codes in creation, suggest far more than a translation of ancient onomastic lists to poetry. That does not mean that within the poetic probing of the writer, there is not an effort to classify. Such classification, however, is more than the task of listing phenomena in some kind of order. Here the task is to search for that inner law, way, code which represents the hidden wisdom of the animate and inanimate phenomena of the world.

The challenge stands for Job: no matter what category of creation is explored, whether animate or inanimate, there lies within it a distinctive *bildende Kraft*, a driving force, a code that is integral to that category of creation.

God's search for wisdom in Job 28

How does this exploration of the processes of cognition and the codes of creation assist us to interpret God's actions in Job 28?

The preamble to God's great discovery is summarised in the famous lines:

But Wisdom, where can she be found?
Where is the place (*māqôm*) of discernment (*bînâ*)?
No mortal knows her way (*derek*)!
She cannot be found in the land of the living. (28:12-13)

Or in the language of a later verse,

But Wisdom, where does she originate?
Where is the place (*māqôm*) of discernment?
She is hidden from the eyes of all living,
Concealed even from the birds of the sky. (28:20-21).

These summary lines connect with a number of key concepts discussed above. First, Wisdom, like every other component of creation is presumed to have a *locus* in the order of things, a *māqôm*, place, that needs

to be determined to understand Wisdom. In addition Wisdom has a *derek*, a way or code like other categories of creation. However, the 'seeing' or cognitive attention and discrimination of humans, or of any other living creatures, is inadequate to discover her distinctive 'way'.

That raises the question of whether the 'way' of Wisdom is like the 'way' or code of other components of creation, or whether the 'way' of wisdom is of another order, deeper, more mysterious than other codes of creation.

Vv. 23-27 are some of the most extraordinary passages in the portfolio of Wisdom literature. This brief passage portrays God exercising cognitive skills to discover Wisdom. God, the Sage, pursues research that humans cannot match. The summary claim in v. 23 announces that God had the cognitive capacity (*bîn*) to identify the way (*derek*) of Wisdom and to discover her place (*māqôm*) in the domains of creation. The verses that follow outline how God achieved that remarkable feat.

First, God looks to the ends of Earth. Step One is for God to exercise the skill of visual perception, surveying all the domains of Earth, from one end to another. God has the capacity to view all creation. God 'sees' (*rā'āh*) everything under the skies, everything. God can attend to all the components of creation. God's capacity to discern and discriminate is not limited like that of humans.

At this point it is significant to recognise the domains that God explores to discover Wisdom, namely the domains of Earth. The realms under analysis are those 'under the skies/heaven'. Wisdom is not in some inaccessible celestial realm. Wisdom is not far away beyond the domains of Earth. Wisdom is not with God in heaven. Wisdom is somewhere on Earth. As Katherine Dell suggests, God plumbs the depths of Earth (Dell 2001: 116).

That Earth is a primary focus of the 'where' of the searching process is already evident in the first section of the chapter. V. 5 opens by confronting the reader with Earth as the domain where humans probe for profit, leaving it convulsed and mutilated (28:5-11). Earth is clearly the 'where' of the search.

Second, a particular time is identified when God made this discovery, namely, when God was at work creating the domains of Earth. It is not immediately clear whether God found Wisdom by accident or by careful search, but given the 'search' context of the chapter it seems logical that

God was searching while creating. In the act of creating the domains of nature, God discovers Wisdom. The way that God searches Earth for Wisdom differs radically from that humans penetrate the landscape. God the Sage is like an artist, discovering something, Wisdom, in the very process of creating.

A significant feature of this portrait of God searching for Wisdom lies not in the listing of the domains themselves, but in that feature of these domains where Wisdom was located. The key lines read:

When God determined the **weight** of the wind,
And meted out the waters by **measure**,
When God made a **rule** (*hōq*) for the rain,
And a **way** (*derek*) for the thunderstorm. (28:25-26)

The terms *derek* and *hōq* immediately suggest that God is capable of identifying the codes, the distinctive inner characteristic of a given phenomenon, whether it be the way of the thunderstorm, the wind or the seas. God does not simply see the storm; God isolates the 'way', that mysterious dimension that makes a storm a storm. In discerning the 'way' of things in the creating process, God acquires Wisdom. Wisdom, it seems, is there for God to discover in the codes of creation.

Third, God is not satisfied with 'discovering' Wisdom. God subjects wisdom to close scrutiny, another level of cognitive analysis. First God 'sees' (*rā'āh*) Wisdom, starting the critical cognitive process all over again. The process that follows is specified by the term *spr*, a verb that in the *pi'el* normally means to count (Job 38:37) or recount. My suggestion in this context is that this verb implies classify or assess. Wisdom is not only discovered; Wisdom's place in the world of things is assessed and classified. Subsequently, God 'establishes' (*kun*) Wisdom in that place. The implication seems to be that once assessed by God, the identity and role of wisdom in Earth is confirmed.

Here I cannot agree with Leo Perdue who argues that Wisdom originated in God's imagination, that God 'saw her in his mind and then spoke her into existence. He then 'established' her much as he secured the foundations of the world' (1984: 186). By transferring Wisdom from the concrete world of Earth to the imaginative world of God's mind, Perdue has created something akin to a Platonic dualism. I contend that in Job 28 God 'finds' Wisdom in the real world; Wisdom is not merely

an idea in God's mind. Wisdom is not something in God but a mystery in creation.

Another striking feature of this passage (28:25-26) is that the final verb used to describe God's vetting exercise is *hāqar*, a key term that possibly summarises the previous three. God has 'even searched/researched' Wisdom. God did not merely find Wisdom; God explored Wisdom using the techniques that any good sage/researcher would employ to explore a subject, the way miners 'penetrate (*hāqar*) the farthest limit' (28:3). Wisdom was no exception. Wisdom received a divine 'going over', a complete critical examination (cf. Job 5:27; 32:11), the way one might assess a very precious jewel.

The way that is wisdom

What is the relation of Wisdom to these codes of creation? Wisdom is clearly not synonymous with any one of them. Yet Wisdom is there!

By discovering the 'ways' of certain phenomena in creation God finds Wisdom. God locates Wisdom when God identifies these 'ways', or underlying mysteries that characterise the phenomena of Earth. Wisdom would appear, therefore, to be the mystery behind all the 'ways' of creation, or perhaps the 'way' behind the many 'ways', the key that unlocks the codes, the mystery that explains the mysteries of Earth, mysteries such as the 'weight of the wind'.

To support this proposition, I would like to return to a famous text about Wisdom that I have sought to elucidate in other contexts—Proverbs 8:22 (Habel 1992: 24). The New Revised Standard Version of this passage reads,

The Lord created me at the beginning of his works,
The first of his acts long ago.

Two features are quite misleading about this rendering. The first is that the verb *qana*, here rendered 'create', is rendered 'acquire' everywhere else in Proverbs. 'The beginning of wisdom is this: acquire (*qana*) wisdom' (Prov. 4:7). God acquired wisdom in Proverbs 8; Job 28:23-27 provides a portrait of **how** God acquired wisdom; the two passages seem to complement each other.

Even more misleading is the translation 'his works', because the Hebrew reads 'his way' (*derek*). The term 'way' once more links this passage with the language of Job 28. Taking into account these two factors, and the need to modify the punctuation accordingly, we have a clear and logical poetic pattern which can be translated as,

YHWH acquired me first,
His way before his works.
From of old, from antiquity I was established,
From the first, from the beginnings of Earth. (Prov. 8:22-23)

The expression, 'his way before his works', is consistent with the portrayal of Job 28. Wisdom is the way before and behind the ways of creation, God's own way, God's design, or as Proverbs 8 suggests, God's designer. Wisdom is the way before the works of creation, the way that informs the ways of creation, the way that is revealed through the ways of creation.

Wisdom and earth

Given these texts that elucidate the presence, place and way of Wisdom, what is the status of Earth? If we read from the perspective of Earth, what new insights are evident? If we apply the ecojustice hermeneutics of the Earth Bible project, what do we discover about Earth? (Habel: 2000). Or, as the question posed in the title of this paper states, what are the implications of God discovering Wisdom in Earth?

These implications, I suggest, can be expressed as follows:

1. *Earth is valued and honoured because Earth is the specific locus YHWH searched to discover/acquire Wisdom.*

Wisdom is here not some form of advanced cognitive capacity or a sifted and judicious understanding of past knowledge and experience. Wisdom is connected with Earth and to be found in Earth. It is Earth that God surveys and probes, not the recesses of the divine mind. Wisdom is linked to a particular dimension of the phenomena of Earth, a hidden code/way/law imbedded in the natural order of things. Wisdom is not outside of Earth but within Earth. Earth is the home of wisdom. Earth is

the privileged locus of a mysterious inner code. And God models the process of becoming a sage by discovering/acquiring Wisdom in Earth.

2. Earth is more than a part of creation; Earth incorporates a web of wisdom that YHWH searches as Sage.

The process of God functioning as a sage searching Earth for the mystery of Wisdom implies that God connects with creation in a particular way. YHWH not only relates to creation as the Creator and Sustainer; YHWH also relates to creation, and especially to Earth, as the source of Wisdom, a domain to be explored for mysteries, codes and wonder. YHWH is the supreme sage, the Creator who delights in the Wisdom inherent in creation. The search of YHWH highlights the codes/ways that interconnect as a web of Wisdom, a maze of mysteries to be discovered by the wise.

These insights suggest that we should view Job 28 as more than a quest for Wisdom. This chapter is also the celebration of Earth as domain permeated by a web of wisdom, a maze of mysteries. Searching for precious stones may mean discovering some of the secrets of Earth; but the greatest secret is Wisdom, deeper than any mine or mind, an integrated pattern of principles.

If God can discern Wisdom in the ways of creation, why is it so difficult for humans to do the same? Is it because they lack reverence for God as v. 28 suggests? Is it because they are looking in the wrong place, in human society rather than nature, in tradition rather than creation, in the Eternal rather than Earth? Is there a hint that when humans know how God found Wisdom in Earth, they will be able to follow suite?

3. Earth is a subject whose voice is mediated through Wisdom to the Earth Community.

If Wisdom dwells in Earth as indicated above, does Wisdom become the mediator of Earth's voice? Is the voice of Wisdom heard through Earth and her presence seen through Earth? In the opening Chapter of Earth Bible Volume Three, we pose the question of where the voice of Earth might be heard in Wisdom literature (Habel 2001a: 23-34). The voice of Wisdom is quite explicit when Woman Wisdom addresses us in Proverbs 8. Is the Wisdom that God discovers during creation in Job 28 given voice in Proverbs 8?

Is Woman Wisdom in Proverbs 8 also speaking for Earth, her place in the cosmos? According to Wurst, Wisdom is the teacher of Earth's mys-

teries, the wise voice of Earth. She was the mid-wife present at creation who knows the key to the web of creation (2001: 58-59).

We have not forgotten the platypus, the *paradoxus*. Wisdom, for us today, implies a complex cognitive process, a thinking subject. If God or any sage discovers wisdom in Earth or the components of Earth, are we not facing a paradox? Are we not moving beyond the traditional model of a subject seeking wisdom by analysing an object to an interaction between subjects? Perhaps Earth or Earth components are not subjects identical with human subjects. And the poet of Job 28 challenges us to relate to Earth not merely as an inanimate source of precious stones, but as a subject with Wisdom, with voice, with wonder.

Conclusion

An exploration of the cognitive processes of categorisation in Job and Wisdom literature, leads us to the ancient practice of distinguishing the code (*derek*) of each component of creation. By following the cognitive steps of a sage, YHWH searches the codes of Earth and discovers Wisdom. The intrinsic value of Earth as the home of wisdom is thereby implied. Wisdom is not an attribute of God but a mysterious force behind all the codes of creation. Following the model of God the Sage, seeking Wisdom involves searching Earth as a source of mysteries, the web that connects all the 'ways' of creation. Paradoxically, in our search for Wisdom we meet Earth as a subject that possesses Wisdom.

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DIALOGUE AND ALLEGORICAL HERMENEUTICS IN JOB 28:28

Carol A. Newsom

The last words of Job 28 are quite simple: “And he [God] said to human-kind, ‘See – fear of the lord – that *is* wisdom, and turning from evil – insight.’” Of course, as one might expect, few things are as simple as they seem.

My framework for reflecting on these words is drawn from two sources: (1) Mikhail Bakhtin’s theories of dialogism and of polyphonic texts;¹ and (2) an insight into the hermeneutical process developed by Gerald Bruns from the work of Hans Georg Gadamer.² A polyphonic text, as Bakhtin describes it, is one in which the author of the work does not impose ultimate ideological control over the various characters and voices of the text but rather allows each character or ‘voice-idea’ to speak freely and independently, engaging the other characters or ‘voice-ideas’ in a dialogic fashion.³ Whether such polyphonic writing is actually possible in practice remains debated, but I find the notion heuristically fruitful for thinking about the relation of the various parts of the book of Job to one another. With the exception of the Elihu speeches, I take the book of Job to be written by a single author, but one who writes polyphonically.⁴ Thus I understand the various component genres of the book of Job, as well as the characters, not to be mere foils used to set up the author’s one great truth, but rather as ideologically autonomous perspectives engaged dialogically with one another. The polyphonic author has brought these various perspectives together and allowed them to quarrel. Both at the propositional level and at the level of ethos, the didactic prose tale of chapters 1-2 and chapter 42 quarrels with the genre of the wisdom

¹ Bakhtin 1981; 1984; 1986.

² Bruns 1992: 202-203.

³ Bakhtin (1984: 93) insisted that the participants in dialogue be understood as ‘voice-ideas’, that is, not simply as propositions but as “the integral point of view, the integral position of a personality”.

⁴ My arguments concerning the book as a whole and the nature of Job 28 in particular are developed in my study, *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations* (forthcoming).

dialogue in chaps. 3-27. The speculative wisdom poem in chap. 28 does not merely form a dismissive reply to the wisdom dialogue but takes sides in the quarrel *with* the prose tale and *against* the dialogue. Although Job's speech in chaps. 29-31 and God's speech in chaps. 38-41 are most closely engaged with one another, they also can be understood as contesting or carrying forward ideas articulated by the preceding voice-ideas in the text.

The wisdom poem in chap. 28 presents a further challenge to this analysis of voice-ideas in dialogue. Do we have one voice or two? Critics are divided as to whether v. 28 should be heard as the conclusion to the poem as a whole⁵ or whether the poem is completed by v. 27 and v. 28 should be understood as a sort of literary graffiti, a reply scrawled across the bottom of the monument of the poem.⁶ Especially from a perspective indebted to Bakhtin's dialogism, 'who' says an utterance is deeply constitutive of what it means. Both understandings of v. 28 can be cogently argued, and the discussion of the passage I will present here could be adapted to either position. But for various reasons I remain convinced that the poem is best read as a single voice, with v. 28 serving as the conclusion of the poem as a whole.

In order to examine the literary and semantic dimensions of v. 28, however, we need to understand (1) what kind of a Bakhtinian voice-idea chapter 28 is, and (2) the rhetorical and hermeneutical moves the text is making. The poem in chap. 28 speaks in a distinctive 'dialect', if not in the narrowly linguistic sense then at least in the metalinguistic sense Bakhtin referred to as heteroglossia (i.e., the distinctive socio-cultural accents of a speaker).⁷ The voice-idea of chap. 28 speaks by means of a recognizable genre (the speculative wisdom poem), employing imagery characteristic of this genre (the trope of seeking and finding embodied in the mining imagery; but more generally its imagery of time and space; space configured in a cosmic scope, and temporality focused on the *arche* of creation). It has its own privileged words, *hokmâ* and *bînâ*, which are used with meanings characteristic of the discourse of speculative wisdom. In his commentary on Proverbs, Michael Fox describes this sense of wisdom as something like a Platonic idea, *hokmâ* as "the perfect and transcendent universal, of which the infinite instances of human wisdom

⁵ So Zuckermann 1991: 143; Van der Lugt 1995: 324; Van Oorschot 1994: 187.

⁶ So Dhorme 1967: 413-414; Driver and Gray 1921: 244-245; Pope 1973: 206.

⁷ Bakhtin 1981: 275; 1986: 114. Bakhtin uses the term heteroglossia in more than one sense. For a helpful discussion see Vice 1997: 18-21.

are imperfect images or realizations.”⁸ Obviously, the question of whether or not human wisdom and transcendent wisdom *are* continuous is very much at issue in Job 28, but the poem makes clear that its interest is in this transcendent dimension of wisdom, not the meanings of ‘skill’, ‘prudence’, ‘erudition’, etc., which the word may have in other contexts.

Having characterized the voice-idea of chapter 28, we can ask about the rhetorical and hermeneutical work it does in the book of Job. As the wisdom poem enters the ‘conversation’ that is the book of Job, its first act is to change the subject, indeed, to strategically change the subject to something that the wisdom poem cares about: the relationship between transcendent wisdom and human wisdom. As a reply to what has gone before, chapter 28 *recasts* the issues of the prose tale and the wisdom dialogue in terms of the categories, vocabulary, and intellectual problems congenial to its own metalinguistic culture.

This is the sort of interpretive transposition of keys that Gerald Bruns describes as the *allegorical* element in hermeneutics. The allegorical process, he says, is “a conversion of the strange into the familiar, or of the different into the same. Allegory is a mode of translation that rewrites an alien discourse....”⁹ In the act of understanding, the interpreter asserts a correlation of categories. “Ah, when you say *X*, I recognize that what you are talking about is what I call *Y*.” What Bruns is saying here is a development of Gadamer’s dictum that we understand differently if we understand at all.

But is this allegorical transposition of the issues of the prose tale and the wisdom dialogue into the categories of speculative wisdom an act of interpretive violence, interpretive insight, or both? The answer, I think, is both. *Hokmâ* and *bînâ* are certainly not the terms that the wisdom dialogue has itself used as primary interpretive categories. As van Oorschot has recently demonstrated, although the terms *hokmâ* and *bînâ* make a sporadic appearance in the wisdom dialogue, it is mostly in terms of human understanding (4:21; 12:2,12; 13:5; 15:8), and only rarely in terms transcendent wisdom (11:6; 12:13).¹⁰ At the level of characters one could imagine Job vigorously resisting the conceptual framework of chapter 28. He has not been engaged in some futile ‘quest for wisdom’; he has been trying to assert a claim of *justice*. Yes, he has used some of the language and genres of speculative wisdom in chap. 12, but he has

⁸ Fox 2000: 352.

⁹ Bruns 1992: 203.

¹⁰ Van Oorschot 1994: 197-198.

used them in order to show that divine perversity rather than *hokmā* is a more apt way of accounting for reality. To allegorize his arguments as themselves a futile quest for wisdom is to obscure the disturbing element of his speech. It is interpretive violence. At the same time the wisdom poem's transposition is insightful about Job's speeches. There is something of the nature of a quest in what he says. He is tunneling, overturning obstacles, sinking shafts in the search for something that is not only more precious than gold but beyond all other values. What he seeks, though he may not call it *hokmā* or *bīnā* is a point of coherency, a vantage point from which God, the world, and his own experience make sense.¹¹ But this is, in fact, something quite beyond human rationality. Thus one might say that the wisdom poem not only understands Job differently but understand him better than he understands himself.

There is no time today, but one could carry out a similar analysis of the friends' speeches in relation to chapter 28's allegorizing interpretation of what they say and do. It is not at the level of the characters, however, but at the level of quarreling genres that the real conflict emerges. Each of the three major genres encountered in the book up to this point—didactic tale, wisdom dialogue, speculative wisdom poem—embodies a different mode of enquiry into moral and cosmological truth. The placement of the wisdom poem after the dialogue suggests that the poem views the wisdom dialogue itself as a type of futile and misguided quest for wisdom. But the relationship may be more subtle than that. The wisdom dialogue, as we know it both from Job and from the Babylonian Theodicy, is itself something of an expose of the limits of the human capacity to know, since it does not end in a single solution or insight into the problem it addresses.¹² Its participants do not finally find wisdom or the place of understanding. So the wisdom poem might be seen simply as drawing a conclusion implicit in the wisdom dialogue as a generic form, thus engaging in a dialogics of agreement, as Bakhtin would put it. And yet, the sensibilities of the two genres are too different for that to seem likely. The energy of the dialogue and the pleasure it provides reside in the unresolved clash of ideas, perceptions, and world-

¹¹ My description of *hokmā* draws on that of Norman Habel (1992: 32).

¹² See especially the remarks of Zuckerman (1991: 249, n. 279), who recognizes that wisdom dialogues do not in fact come to a conclusion. Van der Toorn (1991: 69-70) observes that what passes for a resolution does not derive from the preceding arguments. In my opinion Giorgio Buccellati (1981: 43) is wrong to attempt to discern a dialectical movement in the wisdom dialogues.

views. The limit on human understanding, the fact that one cannot reach the source of understanding, operates not just as an assumption of the wisdom dialogue genre but as a *facilitating* assumption. Only such limits make possible the endlessness of argument.

The ethos of the voice that speaks through the wisdom poem is quite different. It does not share the sensibility that takes pleasure in such intellectual adventurism for its own sake. For the wisdom poem the 'possession' of wisdom and understanding is the highest value, and it will assert in v. 28 that such possession is in fact possible, though in an unexpected fashion. The rhetoric of the wisdom poem is quite sophisticated. I don't have time to develop the full argumentation here, but my argument would take these lines. First, the poem develops the trope of wisdom as desired and sought for object. The imagery continues both to heighten desire and to frustrate it by suggesting that the place of this object is unutterably remote, a place beyond places. The poem *seems* to be moving toward the assertion that though humans cannot find it, God can, since God "gazes upon the ends of the earth" and "sees what is under all the heavens" (28:24). But the poem is teasing us, for it is not a matter of God's superior eyesight. The poem has already said that wisdom is *not* to be found at the ends of the earth and under the heavens (28:13b-14,21-22). At this point (v. 25) the poem suddenly and strategically undercuts the trope upon which it had been based, the trope of wisdom as object.¹³ As the following verses make clear, the activity by which God comes to possess wisdom is not that of searching for an object but that of creating. "When he gave weight to the wind, and set the waters by measure; when he made a limit for the rain, and a way for the thunderstorm, *then* he saw it, recounted it, understood it, searched it out" (28:25-27). God's mode of knowing is not that of subject/object but that of one who understands through the creative act of making.¹⁴ It is not because God sees further but because God sees differently—wisdom, after all, is not in some place beyond place but in the wind, waters, rain, and thunderstorms, i.e., in all aspects of creation. But it is not 'in' them as an object but in their construction and interrelationship, in their presence and limits vis à vis other aspects of creation. Thus the poem is in no sense saying that humans have no access to wisdom. But they will not find it if they look for it as

¹³ By contrast van Oorschot (1994: 188) understands the trope of wisdom as object to be continued throughout the poem.

¹⁴ I owe this insight above all to Gerald Janzen (1985: 197-198). Similarly, Habel (1992: 32) and Geller (1987: 166-67).

an object (even an intellectual object) but only if they also know it through a mode comparable to God's creative activity, that is, through a life of moral creation.

This is where, crucially, the wisdom poem turns to the didactic tale as its ally in the quarrel with the wisdom dialogue. In v. 28 it 'double voices' critical and recognizable phrases from the prose tale, both citing them and appropriating them for its own discourse. The wisdom poem, in agreeing with the prose tale about the importance of *its* privileged words of value ('fear of God', 'turning from evil'), explicitly translates them, or as Bruns would say, allegorizes them. Thus v. 28 appropriates the terms from the prose tale as equivalents for its own terms: "See – the fear of the lord – that *is* wisdom; and turning from evil – understanding." The disposition of piety and the moral habit of resisting evil are the ways in which one does come to know wisdom and understanding. Transcendent wisdom and human wisdom are in some sense continuous after all.

This was not, of course, the point of the prose tale. As I understand it, the prose tale was simply trying to resolve in aesthetic/symbolic forms a contradiction in religious ideology (affirmation of divine blessing appears to undercut the possibility of disinterested piety). But the allegorizing hermeneutics of the wisdom poem claims in effect, "Yes, yes, but you are saying more than you know. For what your little didactic tale also does is to provide a brilliant narrative of what it means to know wisdom and have understanding. They can be embodied, but such embodiment is always done in ignorance of what takes place in the heavens, not by direct apprehension of the transcendent wisdom of the cosmos." Thus the dialogics of agreement recasts what is at stake in the prose tale. And if we had more time, I would argue that it is both an insightful transposition and a flawed one. But the last point I will make is that in appropriating the categories of the prose tale, the wisdom poem may be taking into its own discourse elements that resist full appropriation (or, 'finalization', in Bakhtin's categories). Though it tries to make a simple equation between its privileged terms and those of the prose tale, the prose tale's own exploration of the implications of such 'fear of God' and 'turning from evil' inevitably raise the disturbing questions that invited the interruption of the wisdom dialogue in the first place. This would not surprise Bakhtin, for like the wisdom dialogue, he recognized and delighted in the fact that dialogue is in principle endless.

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WORLD BUILDING IN JOB 28: A CASE OF CONCEPTUAL LOGIC

Albert Kamp

Space, the final frontier. Conceptual space that is, since this study does not explore the stars and planets of the universe. Instead the following enterprise will focus on strange new worlds evoked by texts. The biblical Hebrew text of Job 28 represents such a 'new world' to be discovered. The story contains an elaborate argument on the topics of wisdom (חכמה) and understanding (בִּינָה), situated within an imaginative environment.

A specific cognitive linguistic approach to the text could provide insight into the reality presented and the manner in which Job's argument takes shape. One of the main topics in cognitive linguistics concerns the fashion in which people construct mental representations based on the input of linguistic information. Its theoretical basis of processes like categorisation, conceptual domains, or grounding information seem very much applicable to textual units like Job 28.¹

In the following study, we investigate the manner in which Job 28 appeals to certain conceptual processes, especially the process of world building. First, we summarily describe the theoretical background of the cognitive concept of world building. Second, we put this theoretical model to the test by analysing Job 28. Finally, we draw some conclusions regarding the text of Job and the method of analysis used.

World building and conceptualization

In his elaborate study *Text Worlds: Representing conceptual space in discourse*, the late Paul Werth proposes a specific Cognitive Discourse Grammar (CDG), in which language is viewed as a phenomenon intimately bound up with human experience.² The topics of research are

¹ The cognitive linguistic approach presented is based on a more elaborate methodical study, applied to the biblical Hebrew text of the book of Jonah: Kamp (2002).

² Werth (1999: 50-51), also Werth (1995). More recently the search for some kind of *cognitive discourse grammar*, analogue to a Cognitive Grammar, has become a main topic

discourses rather than sentences, and the models used are cognitive in nature rather than abstract systems. Central in Werth's study is the fashion in which people build up different *worlds* in order to participate in language events. In his opinion, discourse is "a deliberate and joint effort on the part of a producer and recipients to build up a 'world' within which the propositions advanced are coherent and make complete sense. ... In order to do all these things, participants need to be able to represent the notion of 'conceptual background'."³ Werth describes the conceptual background as the *text world*. This is a specific deictic space, defined initially by the discourse itself, and specifically by the referential elements in it.

The notions of a discourse world, text world, and conceptual background are not completely new in cognitive linguistics. They have similarities with Fauconnier's concept of 'mental space', Fillmore's 'frame', Lakoff's 'idealised cognitive models', and more recently, Langacker's 'Current Discourse Space'.⁴ All these concepts share the idea that, during a language event, participants build up some sort of mental representation that reflects the contents of the communication. Werth's approach differs from that of the scholars mentioned, since he fundamentally takes into account complete discourses instead of isolated propositions, sentences, or small groups of sentences.

So, during a specific communicative situation in the real world, language users participate in a *discourse world* in which they build up a *text world*. When the text world is presented in a narrative manner, one may even speak of a *narrative world*: a specific text world containing a sequence of events in which characters are involved, presented by a narrator.⁵

of interest in cognitive linguistics. E.g. Langacker (2001); Knott, Sanders and Oberlander (2001).

³ Werth (1999: 51).

⁴ Fouconnier (1985); Fillmore (1985); Lakoff (1987); Langacker (2001). To illustrate Langacker's view (2001: 144) on the 'current discourse space': "The conceptualization inherent in a usage event includes the interlocutors' apprehension of their interactive circumstances and the very discourse they are engaged in. It thus incorporates their apprehension of the *ground* (G) and the *current discourse space* (CDS). The ground consists of the speech event, the speaker (S) and hearer (H), their interaction, and the immediate circumstances (notably the time and place of speech). The CDS is defined as the mental space comprising those elements and relations construed as being shared by the speaker and hearer as a basis for communication at a given moment in the flow of discourse."

⁵ Kamp (2002: 22).

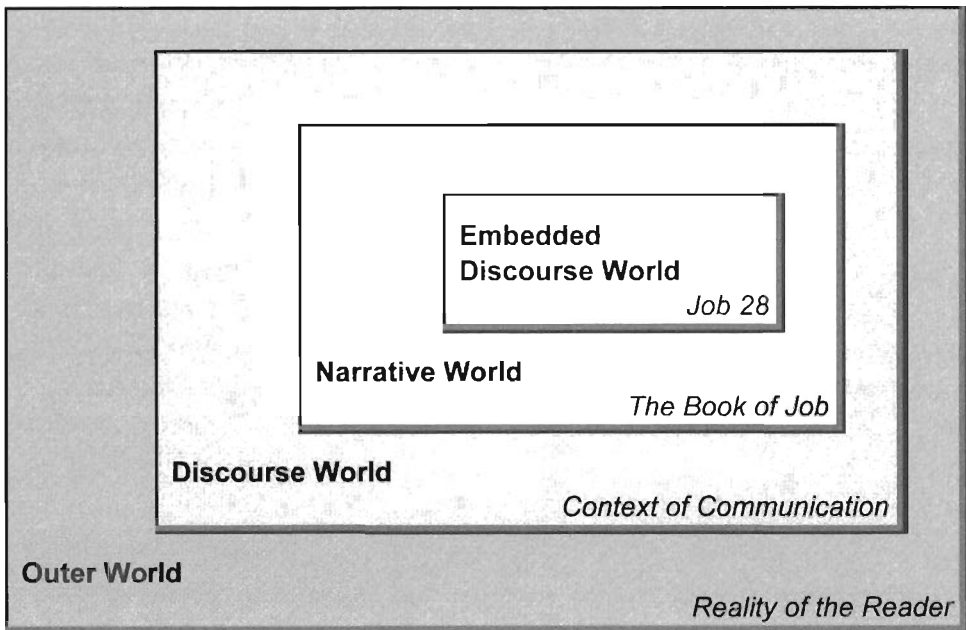


Figure 1.

Figure 1 illustrates the layeredness of separate worlds as it is applied to the text of Job 28. In the communicative setting of a discourse world,⁶ the speaker and hearer, or the author and reader, jointly build up a text or narrative world.⁷ Within the evoked conceptual space, another layer of 'worlds' is possible.⁸ These mental realities, built up by the characters in

⁶ Werth (1997: 87): "The ordinary situations which we discourse about are conceived as taking place in a familiar conceptual space. 'Familiar' means 'close to the participants' experience', hence 'close-by', 'unremarkable', 'well known'. With this as the unmarked expectation, we can also mark certain types of situation as being more or less removed (remote) from this. These, in the present topic, are situations from which the speaker wishes, for some reason, to remain psychologically detached." Cf. Langacker (2001: 145): "A usage event takes place in an immediate context of speech, interpreted broadly as including the physical, mental, social and cultural circumstances."

⁷ The communicative relation between a speaker and hearer is similar to the relation between an author and reader, except that the latter two are not communicating directly because of their separation in space and time.

⁸ Werth (1997: 90): "Several kinds of information contribute to this space: world building, function-advancing, frames, and inferences. World building elements comprise deictic, referential, and descriptive information - in other words, scene-setting details. Function-advancing propositions incorporate the new information which represents the point of the discourse, i.e. what it adds to the knowledge of the participants. Frames organize the general and community knowledge accessible to the participants and provide semantic and pragmatic enrichment for the referential elements nominated in the discourse. Inferences allow further indirect information about propositions to be generated." In his

the text, are called *sub-worlds*.⁹ They represent any state of affairs that can be imagined or referred to by the participants of the text world. As in the real world context, a specific narrative world can contain separate embedded discourse worlds (like Job's discourse in Chapter 28) or even embedded narrative worlds. In theory, the layeredness of worlds is endless. Text worlds are rich and complete worlds: they represent human experience rather than mathematical modelling. The linguistic data presented provide the locations, the temporal coordinates, the entities participating, and their mutual relations. The linguistic presentation of the text also distinguishes between backgrounded and foregrounded information. In other words, the ground of each *world* establishes the context in which the figure highlights a specific topic or piece of information.¹⁰

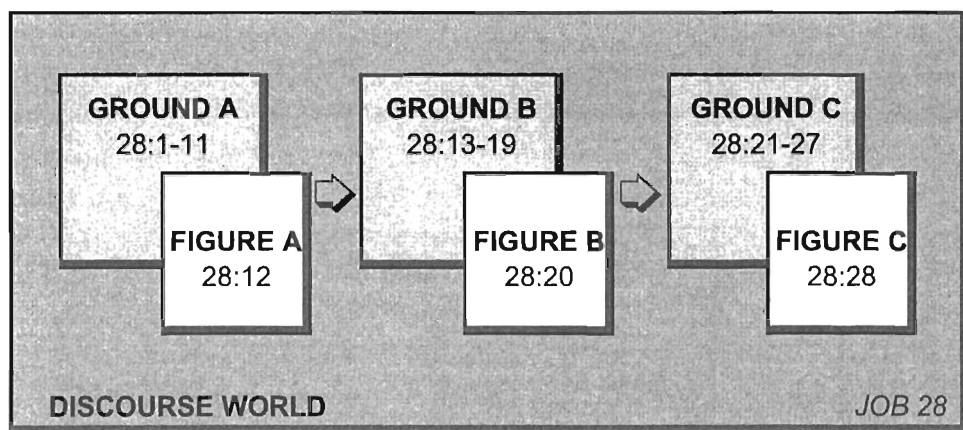


Figure 2. Sub-worlds in Job 28.

Applying this to the biblical Hebrew text of Job 28 (Figure 2), we can distinguish three sub-worlds within Job's embedded discourse.¹¹ Each

study of coherence in discourse Givon (1987: §2.4) enumerates the same kind of elements as Werth: topics-participants continuity, temporal continuity, spatial continuity, action or theme continuity.

⁹ Werth (1997: 89) makes a distinction of three kinds of sub-worlds, either of the believe type, probability type or temporary alteration type.

¹⁰ Cf. Langacker (2001: 151): "Following a suggestion by Harder (1996), we might think of linguistic structures (of whatever size) as instructions to modify the current discourse space in particular ways. Each instruction involves the focussing of attention within a viewing frame." More elaborated on foreground and background within discourse is Tomlin (1987).

¹¹ This threefold division of Chapter 28 seems to coincide with the formal literal division of Van Der Lugt (1995: 320), except for the vv. 1-4, which he calls an opening canto of the poem as a whole. Central in his division of three cantos is the structural influence of

sub-world contains backgrounded information, followed by a specific figure in which the main topic of wisdom and understanding is highlighted. Four clauses question the location and the direction (28:12ab.20ab); two clauses indicate an answer (28:28bc). The textual presentation of three consecutive sub-worlds provides in a sequence that seems to establish some sort of logic in Job's argument.

Sub-world A: Job 28:1-12 (Figure 3)

The first verses of Chapter 28 (Ground A) establish a specific sub-world. The description of human knowledge concerning precious metals and stones, and the display of mining activities stimulate the reader to form a specific conceptual space. In order to understand the world presented, the reader has to activate different categories and cognitive models within the domain of mining precious things. The textual information given provides the components and sets the ground for the evoked environment.

In the world of the living, man knows the precise locations of valuables inside the earth, even in the deepest darkness of rocks. He also has the mining skills to recover these precious metals and stones. In contrast, other living beings, like the birds of prey or the proud beasts, don't have this kind of knowledge or ability. Four times (Job 28:7-8) the negative particle **אֵל** stresses their inability to see hidden things or to go inside the earth and its rock. An elaborate display of human mining skills closes the establishment of the ground.

Once the reader is introduced to a specific conceptual space, the two clauses of Job 28:12 present foregrounded information (Figure A). Parallel to the description of the locations for silver and gold, Job utters the question on the whereabouts of wisdom (**וְהַחֲכָמָה מַאיִן הִמָּצְאָה**) and the

a refrain in 28:12 and 28:20: "In other words, the structural insights which have been put forward on the basis of thematic connections and verbal repetitions are integrated most convincingly when we take as our starting point that the refrain of vv.12 and 20 is a closing line at the end of the second and the third cantos of the poem." For an elaborate comparison and argumentation on other possible divisions of Job 28, see Van Der Lugt (1995: 309-324). Despite a different division of Job 28 Van Oorschot (1994: 184) recognizes the importance of the structural influence of the vv. 12 and 20: "So kann trotz einiger gegenteiliger Versuche die Bedeutung der fast wortgleichen Verse 12 und 20 als strukturierender Signale nicht außer Acht bleiben. Dabei kommt ihrer Deutung als einleitendem oder abschließendem Refrain die größte Plausibilität zu."

place for understanding (וְאֵי זֶה מְקוֹם בִּינָה). Within the larger discourse, these two clauses stand out syntactically because of their question marks (וְאֵי and מֵאֵי). During the process of conceptualisation by the reader, these markings attract special attention and emphasize the semantic contents. In this way, the lexemes for wisdom and understanding are distinguished as new and striking information within the total amount of data given.

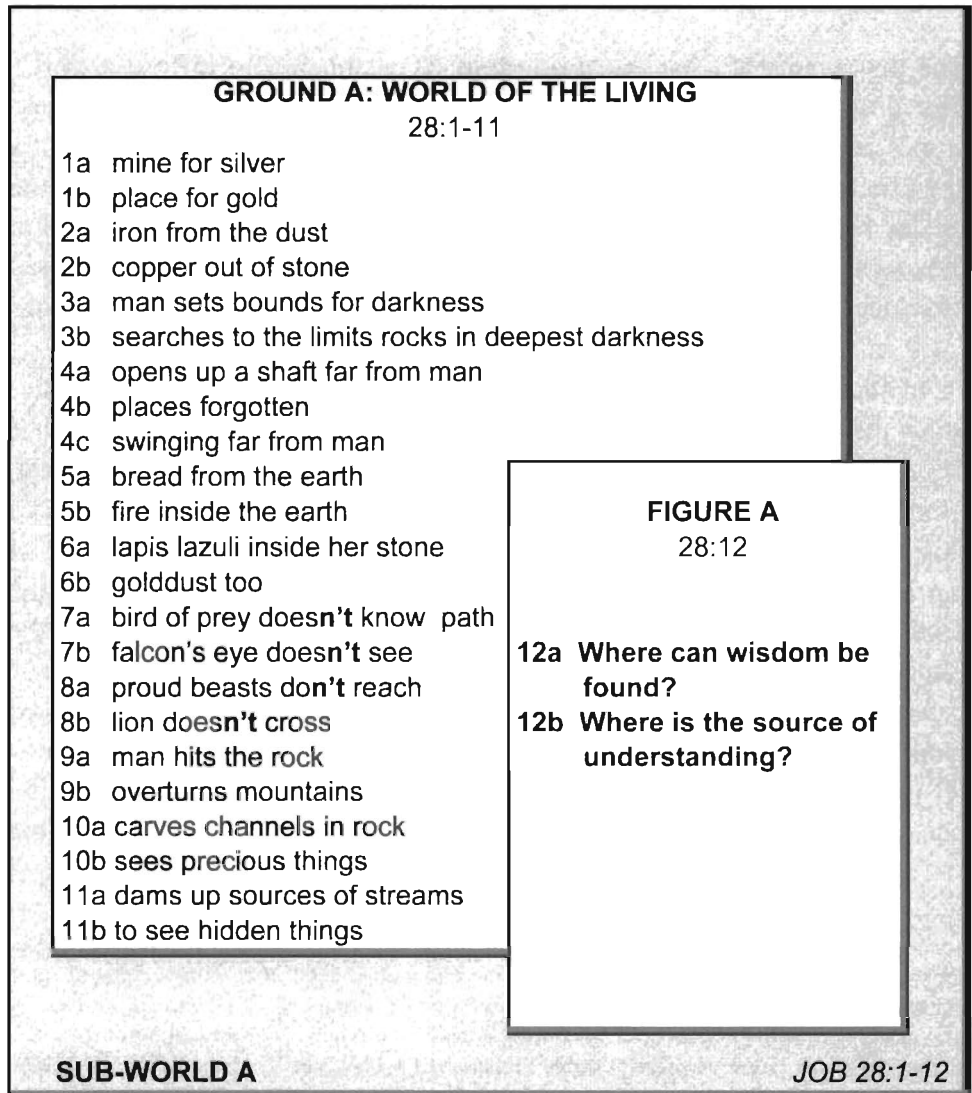


Figure 3. Job 28:1-12.

One could even say, that within the activated conceptual space, Job 28:12 opens a new sub-world in which the modal reality of the question is the central theme.¹² As in a popped up window, the figurized contents of Job's question are highlighted at the foreground of the reader's mental representation.

Sub-world B: Job 28:13-20 (Figure 4)

The introduction of a new sub-world (Ground B) stresses the impossibility of comparison between the former Ground A and the former Figure A. In comparison with the world of the living, even compared to the knowledge of hidden things, wisdom and understanding can not be found or traded. This is illustrated by the significant input of negative markers on the syntactical level of the text.¹³ The Hebrew text mentions the negative particle **לֹא** ten times, the clauses directly following continue the negation two times (28:16b and 28:17b), and Job 28:14b has **לֹא**. Nothing can compare with or value wisdom. Even the exception that proves the rule in Job 28:18b ("*A pouch of wisdom is better than rubies*") shows the distinction between the ground and the figure. Beside these negative markings, the abundance of *yiqtol* clauses looks significant as well. They stress the modal perspective in which a specific item from Ground A cannot be compared with the items of Figure A.¹⁴

¹² Job's question in 28:12 opens a specific kind of modal world which reflects a reality in which the place for wisdom and understanding is no longer hypothetical. Cf. Werth (1999: 176): "Modality is in the category of interaction: the interaction between the participants and what is said. We would these days most naturally think of it in terms of illocutionary force or speech acts. Thus, modality has to do with the relationship between the speakers and the text. More specifically, it has to do with their assessment of such factors as truth, probability and reliability." Following M.L. Ryan, Semino (1997: 69) points to the idea that most fictional worlds, especially narrative fiction, comprise of a modal structure: "It consists of a world that is regarded as actual and an infinity of alternate possible worlds." Beside the domain or world that is taken as actual, there are epistemic or knowledge worlds, hypothetical extensions of knowledge worlds, intention worlds, wish worlds, obligation worlds and alternate or fantasy universes.

¹³ Idem Van Der Lugt (1995: 321): "The Repetition of the negation *l'*, which dominates the canto as a whole, is striking, also in the context of the poem in its entirety."

¹⁴ Cf. Kamp (2002: 55-58), especially on Joosten (1997:58): "Biblical Hebrew *yiqtol* is not a form expressing the present-future, nor an expression of non completed action, nor an expression of cursive aspect. ... *yiqtol* usually expresses that an action will happen in the future, that it may, should or could happen: these are modal uses. ... In light of all this, *yiqtol* should be pulled out of the indicative system and set on one side, together with the other modal verb forms of Biblical Hebrew: the imperative, the jussive, the cohortative,

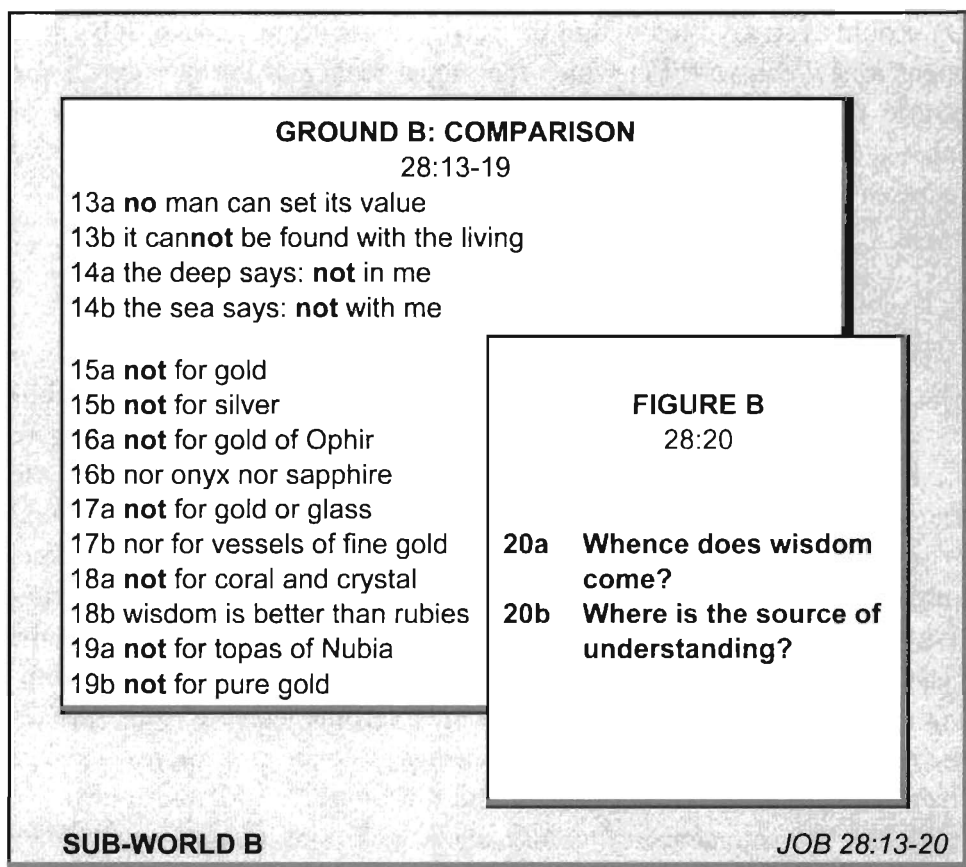


Figure 4. Job 28:13-20.

The syntactic markings contribute to a certain conceptual understanding by the reader. The conceptual domain of wisdom and knowledge simply doesn't relate to the activated domain of mining precious things. All the possible connections with the separate categories of metals and precious stones are negated. This leaves the reader with an activated but still empty domain for wisdom and understanding.

After an elaborate comparison, Job 28:20 re-establishes the first question: "Whence does wisdom come and where is the source of understanding?" The new figure no longer emphasizes the place where wisdom can be found, but accentuates the place from which it comes. The difference between the former passive verb form in 28:12a (חמצא, *niph'al*) and the latter active form in 28:20 (תבוא, *qal*) stresses a difference within the

and *w^eqatal*. The forms constitute a modal subsystem opposed *en bloc* to the indicative system."

conceptual domain for wisdom.¹⁵ Instead of showing man searching for the places of wisdom, the first clause of 28:20 shows another perspective. It starts from the point of view of wisdom. Since the established ground of human knowledge couldn't offer an answer the first time, maybe the re-established figure in 28:20 can. This renewed information influences the reader's point of view within his or her conceptual space. He or she no longer regards wisdom as an object, but as a subject. This textual change in verbal information, thus, stimulates a change in the conceptual perception of the reader.

Sub-world C: Job 28:21-28 (Figure 5)

The re-establishment of the second figure (Job 28:20) opens up a new perspective in answering Job's questions. The human understanding of mining and the knowledge of precious things are definitely backgrounded and they make place for another ground (Ground C). First, the textual information of the hidden nature of wisdom for all living things, even for the ears of Abaddon and Death, confirms the former sequence of negations (Job 28:21-22). Wisdom cannot be found in or by the world of the living. Secondly, a new subject is introduced, followed directly by a display of knowledge about this subject and its characteristics. God knows, because he has insight into things hidden for the living (28:23).

In contrast to the inability of humans to know the place of wisdom, God understands the way and the place. Therefore, God can answer Job's first question and his second as well. God understands the direction and the location. The textual information following this divine knowledge is attributive. Job 28:24 describes the way in which God sees to the end of the earth and beneath the heavens. His perception is totally different from that of humans, despite their ability to see in the darkest of rocks. Furthermore, in 28:25-26, God's qualities refer to his divine skills: fixing the weights of winds, setting the measures of the waters, making rules for the rain or setting a course for thunderstorms. Again, these divine activities are in a different league than the human skills of mining.¹⁶ Finally, in

¹⁵ Cf. Strauß (2000: 135): "Offensichtlich im Sinne eines Gedankenfortschrittes läuft V.12a auf das (Nicht-)Finden (מָצָא), V.20a auf die - für den Menschen unergründbare - Herkunft (בְּרָא) der Weisheit hinaus."

¹⁶ Cf. Hoffman (1996: 280): "It becomes clear that humanity's ability, as great as it may be, is substantively different from that of God: the latter determines at will the laws gov-

28:27, wisdom appears not to be something created or made by God. When he saw it, he appraised, measured and probed it.¹⁷ This illustrates not an exploitation of wisdom, but an appreciation.

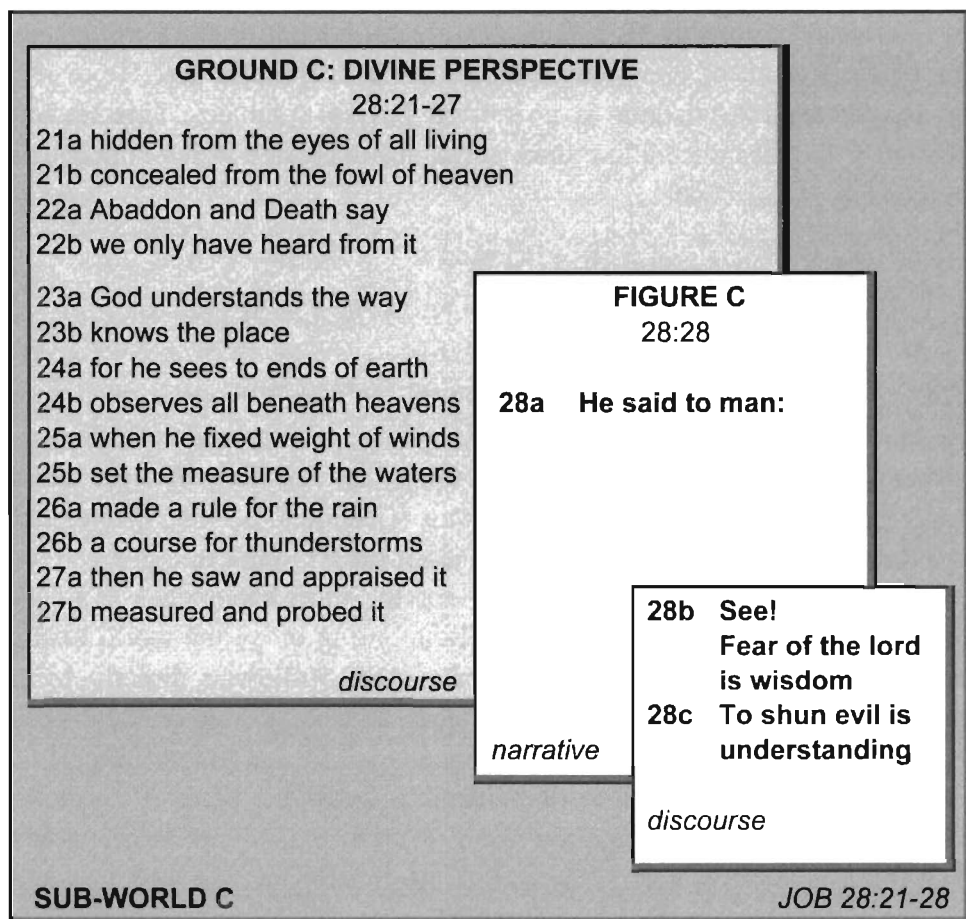


Figure 5. Job 28:21-28.

The introduction of God as a new character in the conceptual space of the reader activates a whole new ground. The text, thus, stimulates the reader to open a new domain, in which categories of divine features and models of divine action take a central position. As a result, the human world

erning the world, while the most humans can attain is the use of this lawfulness.”

¹⁷ Cf. Habel (1985: 396): “The act of “penetrating/probing” (*hqr*) points to the mystery (*heger*) of Wisdom which finally only God can “probe” (*hqr*, v.27). Thus the mining exercise is a paradigm for probing a mystery in the natural domain which parallels probing wisdom at a deeper level in the cosmic domain.”

view is traded for a divine perspective, which opens up a range of new possibilities in answering the figurized questions.

The ending clauses of Job 28 (syntactically an embedded discourse introduced by a narrative *wayyiqtol*: וַיֹּאמֶר) lead the reader to form another new sub-world. The syntactic marking in 28:28a ('and he said') draws the reader's attention and directs him or her to a different reality within the larger discourse world. Job is no longer speaking about something, but narrating a communicative act of God. This means that Job himself is no longer speaking. God is speaking instead. This change in communicative levels seems to bring the information closer, while, on a textual level, it is further away: the narrator says that Job says that God says.

After the introduction with an imperative form (יִרְאֵה), which draws attention to the act of seeing, the ultimate answers to Job's questions are given. After 27 verses of obscurity, the reader can finally fill the empty domain of wisdom and understanding with semantic information. However, the specific content of the information is puzzling. The locations of wisdom and understanding, or even the way from where they come, are not directly clarified. Instead, the words stress the attitude of human beings. Within the conceptual structure of Job 28, this means a subtle shift in comparison and categorising. Starting from within the world of the living and searching for an exact location, Job's discourse offers a certain conceptual logic of arguments: from a place for wisdom to a way; from a human point of view to a divine perspective. All the presented components of the three sub-worlds are finally put together in the words by God:¹⁸ wisdom and knowledge are not found as places in the world of the living, nor are they equal to precious metals or stones, but they are found in the attitude to God. This religious and moral attitude of humans provides the answer and solves the problem.¹⁹ Most surprisingly, the text

¹⁸ This means that, within the conceptual logic of the text, Job 28:28 is a structural part of Chapter 28 as a whole, contrary to some scholars, like Strauß (2000: 155), who have doubts about the originality of this vers: "Angesichts des MT-Bestandes von V.28 kann - mit der großen Mehrzahl der Exegeten - kaum ein Zweifel daran bestehen, daß es sich nach Stil, Form und Inhalt des Verses um einen späteren Zusatz handelt, der immerhin als solcher das Ende von Kap.28 markiert, jedoch das formale und sachliche Gefälle im Kontext als >>prosaische Nachschrift eines Lesers<< (GHölscher 70) unterbricht."

¹⁹ Cf. Habel (1985: 393 and 401): "God has direct acces to Wisdom; mortals only gain wisdom indirectly through submission to the Lord"; "the difference between v. 28 and the preceeding poem lies not so much in the different kinds of wisdom but in the modes by which wisdom is acquired: God acquires eternal Wisdom by an immediate personal discovery deep in the primordial past, while mortals acquire wisdom inderectly through submis-

doesn't present specific lexical or semantic components, but gives way to a certain attitude that is understandable for human beings.

Conclusions

The cognitive linguistic approach elaborated in this study clarifies on two accounts the influence of conceptualization during the process of reading. First, the cognitive model of world building contributes to the understanding of the text of Job 28. Within Job's discourse, the text stimulates the reader to open different sub-worlds. The distinction between ground and figure accentuates the difference between highlighted and backgrounded information. In this way Job's discourse presents three successive sub-worlds. At the end of each world, the text places the figurized information of wisdom and knowledge in the foreground. The continuously changing input of textual information, thus, establishes a logic argument in which the sequence of sub-worlds show an evolution in Job's questions. This directs the mental representation of the reader from a place and value for wisdom and understanding, to a religious and moral attitude. On a textual level, the last figure and answer to the questions are divine: God knows the location and the direction of wisdom and understanding, but, for mankind, this can only be found through a certain attitude to God.

Second, a cognitive linguistic approach to Job 28 clarifies the manner in which human thinking takes shape. The textual input not only refers to a conceptual logic within Job's discourse, it also appeals to the conceptual basis of processing linguistic data by readers. The concept of building worlds in Job 28 resembles human thinking. The different categories of precious stones and the cognitive models of mining are very similar to the conceptual domains, categories and models of a reader. Even the comparison of grounded data with figurized elements looks the same. This means that a reader, in processing Job 28, performs the same kind of world building in order to understand the conceptual logic within the text. As a result, the conclusions of Job 28:28 appeal to Job and to the reader of this text as well. Instead of searching for a semantic description, the text stimulates one to consider the right attitude to God to be the content of wisdom and knowledge.

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JOB AND COGNITION IN CONTEXT – IMPRESSIONS AND PROSPECTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EXEGESIS

James Alfred Loader

A colloquium of experts in biblical exegesis, linguistics and the cognitive disciplines assumes that there is common ground between them. It assumes that exploring the common ground is worthwhile, perhaps that the fields in question can benefit from each other, or that one can at least benefit from the other. The papers offered at the colloquium on Job and cognition in context as well as much of the discussions in the ensuing workshops illustrate very clearly that cognitive linguistics has much to offer Hebrew semantics and, by the same token, biblical exegesis. It seems to me that biblical exegesis has the most to gain from the interface and the least to contribute. Not that biblical scholarship has *nothing* to offer at the intersection of the disciplines in question. It may, for instance, offer cognitive linguists an opportunity to test their models. It may also alert them to the extraordinary difficulties faced by a discipline whose business it is to understand ancient texts by any means, including by means of a model incorporating insights offered by cognitive approaches. On this basis cognitive linguists who find the exegesis of ancient texts important enough to justify the effort, may refine their explanatory models and tools to the greater benefit of the biblical disciplines. But that is about as far as it goes. The association between cognitive linguistics and biblical scholarship could be called mutualistic, where both participants benefit, but in this case the symbiosis seems to me heavily slanted in favour of biblical exegesis, who receives more than it gives.

1. *The business of exegesis*

The business of exegesis is to understand texts. Therefore a biblical scholar would quite naturally expect a symposium of this nature to be about the question, “What could cognitive linguistics contribute to our understanding of biblical texts?” A natural corollary of the question,

addressed to themselves by biblical exegetes, should be, "In what areas can exegesis receive and apply such a contribution?" Now we do have contributions in this volume by biblical experts, *viz.* those of Ellen van Wolde, David Clines, Edward Greenstein and Norman Habel, that could illustrate aspects of the answers to such questions, but it may be helpful to put the question into a somewhat broader framework.

My primary impression of the proceedings of the colloquium is probably an indirect one, but in my opinion nevertheless touches upon a crucial issue as far as the intersection of the disciplines in question is concerned. The expositions offered here of the possibilities of cognitive approaches to the Hebrew Bible rather severely expose the unsatisfactory simplicity with which the bifurcation of so-called 'historical' and 'literary' approaches to or readings of the biblical text is still regarded in the exegetical disciplines. These still seem to be locked in an unholy war, often perceived to be taking place between 'the' historical approach and 'the' literary approach (as if these are in themselves unitary things). If a cognitive approach is to exert influence in biblical exegesis, this simplistic perception of our business will have to be deconstructed as dated and unsuitable for appropriate readings of our texts.

2. The difficulty of the business

During the symposium much has been said, illustrated and explained by mats and carpets, cats and raptors, platypuses and ostriches, snakes and ships, the Titanic and icebergs and Bill Clinton's propensity to sink icebergs in the political arena; we have heard about games played by Charles and George, about mining and gold nuggets, silver and copper—in fact, there was time to speak of many things, of shoes and ships and sealing wax and cabbages and kings.

The ancient Hebrew texts, the Tenach and the Old Testament (all three meaning different things) also speak of humans and the animal species, of leaders and kings, of ships and industry, of mining and even of games. But the difficulty of reading these texts is that the resources we have for gleaning information on the cultural background, historical setting, the experiential background of language in actual use and so on are extremely limited. Not only are they restricted, but also very hard to come by, so that a number of fully-fledged disciplines, such as ancient Near Eastern studies, Semitics, archaeology, the history of religions, the his-

tory of ancient Israel and so on are necessary to provide the material with which we have to work. Therefore it is not so easy for biblical scholars to fulfil the prerequisites for implementing the insights of cognitive linguistics in a meaningful way.

- One reason for this is the condition of our texts, coming as they do from a variety of ancient backgrounds and religious settings in the distant past. This is aggravated by the effect of the transmission process of progressively diminishing our access to them as we become ever more removed from them. There are—on the levels of both the tradition and the transmission of the text—so many social, religious and cultural settings pertinent to the understanding of one text that multiple backgrounds become relevant for our purpose of understanding it. These cannot merely be combined in an additive fashion, as though $a + b + c + d$ etc. would simply add up to the truth. We cannot, for example, merely reconstruct an earlier prose narrative in the Book of Job, extrapolate, date and locate it (say) in Edom some centuries before the poetic dialogues, then project it against its background as (say) an expression of restitution as the solution to the theodicy problem, then interpret the dialogue of Job and his three friends in a later period as a vindication of Job's protest against this kind of thing, and finally add them up as though mutually exclusive convictions can form a harmonious conclusion. Likewise, to use an even more problematic example, the following is quite thinkable in the light of what tradition and redaction criticism of the Hebrew Bible has already achieved: An exegete could isolate and interpret a pre-monarchical kernel in a legal collection; then it could be interpreted against a supposed background of the First Temple in Jerusalem; but, since the redaction later incorporated it in other contexts, it could also be interpreted within such frameworks, such as the exilic milieu, the period of the fixing of the canon, various stages of the rabbinic transmission and so on. But this will be very difficult because various cultural and religious contexts come into play, each one of them legitimate and important. A forthright application of 'the' cognitive approach in order to reach 'the' correct interpretation of 'the' text is just not possible. What *would* be called for, is a whole series of cognitive interpretations of a whole series of 'texts' on various levels and in various contexts, each of them in its own right carried out synchronically, that

is, performed historically in very different contextual settings at various points on the diachronic line of the transmission.

- Another reason is the nature of the cluster of disciplines with which we have to work in order to prepare the ground for putting to use the insights of the cognitive approach to our texts. It seems to me that a vast knowledge of the languages, literatures, cultures, religions and history of the whole ancient Near Eastern world is required in order to enable the interpreter to make use of those unlimited 'additional structures' deemed necessary by Ronald Langacker (this volume) to determine an expression's meaning if that expression occurs in a text from the Hebrew Bible. Such a reservoir would be necessary to draw upon once the actual work of interpreting texts with the help of cognitive linguistics begins. The acceptance, for example, of the task of inferential cognition in understanding texts (Arie Verhagen, this volume) infers for us the shouldering of a huge burden which may not always have equal prospects of significant results. However, because of the potential importance of details in gauging the boundaries of 'lexical' and 'cognitive' meanings, we would not be able to dispense with such knowledge. In an age of ever increasing specialisation, *we cannot master enough of the disciplines and sub-disciplines required* to attain even the minimum resources necessary for a study of 'cognition in context'. So many angles come into play that we will have to devise ways of taking them seriously and of tapping into the necessary resources so as to make sensible use of them. This leads directly to the next consideration: the rethinking of the hermeneutical process.

3. *Rethinking the hermeneutical process*

By 'hermeneutical process' I do not mean the rules for exegesis, but the broader sense of the theory of interpreting texts in order to understand them, that is, the understanding business. Reflection on the conditions of understanding seems to acquire a new urgency in that the insights of cognitive linguistics are now beginning to highlight the fact that all aspects involved in understanding the text are part of the hermeneutical process. In the light of the new possibilities being offered and, therefore, new demands being made by cognitive approaches, the understanding process and its conditions will have to be rethought for the purpose. To

read the Hebrew Bible in a way that can make use of cognitive inputs, we need the thorough integration of several 'sub-disciplines' of exegesis.¹ It is not possible for one exegete to command all of them. But every exegete does need all of them.

- For one, we obviously need historical criticism. Far from being a thing of the past, it seems to acquire new significance in the light of the presuppositions of cognitive linguistics. We shall again need to work analytically with our texts before moving on to more synthetic aspects. We shall have to attempt the isolation of layers *and* to identify redactional processes. This may be illustrated by the symposium discussion on the question whether Job 28 has or has not been displaced in the book. The view of Edward Greenstein (this volume) and David Clines (this volume) that the chapter has been accidentally displaced from the end of the Elihu speeches to its present position, must materially influence their understanding of the poem. Likewise, Norman Habel's thesis (this volume) that Job 28 expresses the conviction that God searches the earth as a sage and finds wisdom *in* the earth can only hold if the poem is *not* part of the expositions of Elihu as a defender of God.
- We shall also have to master the techniques of 'literary' or 'text-immanent' readings, structures, stylistics, narrative techniques, poetic devices and the like. We need the sophistication of the 'literary' approaches to the text—not as opposed to historical criticism, but *in conjunction with it* (pointedly illustrated by the thoroughly delightful contribution on irony and the embarrassment of God by Dirk Geeraerts (this volume)). Historical-critical and literary abilities are fairly well established in the tradition of exegesis, albeit often along the lines of the schools meant in my reference above to the either-or-bifurcation in biblical studies. But, if cognitive linguistics is to play a role in the understanding of our texts, several other sub-disciplines acquire a new urgency.
- We need to integrate the discipline of the history of Israel / Jewish history in the process of understanding our texts. If we wish to draw

¹ Or so exegetes have generally come to regard them, whereas several of these are in fact fully independent disciplines in their own right.

on the resources of the history of Israel for the purpose of highlighting the political aspects of language in use, we will need the results of historiography to inform us. For example, if Amos is to be understood within the context of eighth century Northern Israel, we will need the input of what historiography can offer as to the economic welfare, the social conditions and the policies of Jeroboam II during the time.

- The importance of archaeology is increased. Since the spectacular discoveries made by archaeologists in the ancient Near East since the nineteenth century have established archaeology quite firmly as an 'ancillary' discipline, this would probably not normally be denied. But a new dimension is now acquiring urgency: the need for archaeological inputs *specifically in exegesis*. This has become quite evident in the handling of the focal text of the symposium, Job 28. The mining activities referred to in the first part of the poem are obviously elucidated by the input of archaeological illumination of such texts as Job 28:4 about workers 'dangling suspended' in the dark shafts of mines. Discoveries of shafts with the marks of ropes at the shaft entrances enable us to understand the text as referring to the lowering of the workers into the darkness of the mine. But this facet of the biblical scholar's arsenal is not merely limited to the clarification of isolated words, sentences or verses. Ellen van Wolde (this volume) has shown that the archaeological contribution to our encyclopaedic store enables us to make vital inferences from the *structure* of the poem so that, in turn, the *meaning* of the text becomes quite another. From our encyclopaedic store we can reconstruct what she calls the 'prototypical order' in the ancient mining activities (finding ore – making shafts – letting people down – extracting – washing – smelting – manufacturing precious things). But in the poem of Job 28 the prototypical order has been changed (places – extracting – making shafts – miners dangling – flint tools – turning over mountains – shafts again – rivers/water – hidden things uncovered). The very vantage point is defined by the variation from the prototypical order, so that the conceptualisation of wisdom itself is overturned and the poem carries a critique of the devastation wreaked by so-called wisdom.
- Closely related is the interface of archaeology and the ecological and environmental dimension, so that archaeology itself has become a multi-disciplinary undertaking focusing on interrelationships of geol-

ogy, hydrology, climatic factors, food production etc., and no longer solely on the artefacts produced by people.² The relevance for exegesis of such newer emphases in archaeology, generating an approach that can only be called 'holistic', should be obvious and can itself be illustrated quite vividly in Job 28 with its references to geological propensities, temperature and hydraulic regulation (cf. Job 28:11) in contemporary mining activities.³

- The social dimension has already made an impact on the study of the Hebrew Bible,⁴ but this too acquires a new significance in the effort to use the possibilities of cognitive linguistics. Pierre Van Hecke's observation (this volume) that our interest in the way people think⁵ necessitates, among other things, our acquaintance with a whole cognitive domain of kinship, which is a very complex issue even in contemporary terms. Social anthropology becomes a necessary tool for identifying the extra-linguistic phenomena drawn upon by linguistic structures and putting them to use in the endeavour to understand texts.
- The same goes for the cultural history of Israel and the ancient Near East,⁶ as well as for
- The well-established discipline of the history of religion, both of Israel itself and the surrounding peoples.
- Finally, linguistics itself—and not just the traditional grammar of biblical Hebrew—evidenced in this colloquium as vividly as

² For an example of this newer, more encompassing approach: Finkelstein (1988). I do not think it to be coincidence that not only Habel's contribution, but also that of Van Wolde exhibits a clear environmental inclination.

³ Cf. Loader (1995).

⁴ Prime illustrations would be the introduction to the Hebrew Bible written from this perspective by Gottwald (1985), and several works of Walter Brueggemann in the field of biblical theology (cf. the volume of his essays edited by Patrick Miller, 1994).

⁵ In the business of understanding biblical and other texts from the distant past, the past tense 'thought' complicates matters even more.

⁶ I think this will have to include the psychological aspects of culture, so that the programme espoused in Johannes Pedersen's standard work (1926-1940), should attain new interest.

anywhere,⁷ is a *sine qua non* for making use of cognitive inputs into the interpretation of the Bible. Lexical meaning and cognitive domains, conceptual organisation, interlocutors, trajectors and landmarks, default viewing arrangements and conceptual unifications, augmentation and the like are central concepts in cognitive linguistics, but not in exegesis. They are not normally part of the exegetical armour, but seem to be indispensable for any effort to come to terms with the possibilities and demands of cognitive linguistics. Having been illustrated as they were and having been explicitly recommended to biblical scholars by experts for the very purpose of understanding our texts, I don't think that these can be ignored if we are to apply cognitive approaches in the exegesis of biblical literature.

All of these are needed as a matter of building up the competence to draw on the resources—both linguistic and extra-linguistic—necessary for reaping the advantages of cognitive inputs into exegetical practice.

4. *Interdisciplinary cooperation*

I suggest that these traditional and not so traditional disciplines should remain/become part of the exegetical pool and that teaching the Hebrew Bible should consciously develop this line. But nobody can be an expert in all of these fields. The disadvantages of exegetes of the Hebrew Bible referred to above should make it all the more clear that it is no mean task to integrate so many fields of expertise.

- We exegetes could pretend to be masters of them, but in that case we would not rise above the level of Jack-and-Jill-of-all-trades. Therefore we should be content to specialise in our field of competence rather than presume to more than is practically achievable.
- But this should, I suggest, go hand-in-glove with the reorientation in 'biblical hermeneutics' referred to above. The Bible is *a* text as well as *several* texts on several levels, embedded in different cultural settings (even where one single portion of this Bible is concerned). The

⁷ Cf., for example, Takamitso Muraoka (this volume), as well as the paper intended for but not actually delivered at the symposium by John Taylor (this volume).

business of understanding the Hebrew Bible has become so complex that a necessary aspect of the reorientation should be the *development of an interdisciplinary ethos* and the *establishment of interdisciplinary structures*. We will need to become ancillary to each other, each one of our disciplines a 'Hilfswissenschaft' in relation to the others.

- This should also—perhaps most importantly—become an impulse to modesty.

5. *Relevance for theology*

The last point probably has relevance in a special sense for exegetes in particular. Since exegetes are usually theologians (not necessarily, but usually so), exegesis and its results usually deeply inform, influence and mould biblical theology. The impulse to modesty that, at least in my experience, flows from the fresh perspectives considered in the colloquium papers, operates on several levels. For one, we can't be linguists, cultural anthropologists, historians, archaeologists, exegetes and theologians all at once. Second, if so many different but *convincing* readings of a poem such as Job 28 are possible, we can't all be right all the time, and probably nobody is ever *quite* right—we have, haven't we, been reading Job 28? And third, a profound consciousness could be engendered of how relative to so many perspectives our exegeses actually are and how tentative our theologies are therefore bound to be. Which would be very wholesome for theology.

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SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE RELATION BETWEEN COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS AND EXEGESIS

Leo Noordman

The organisers of the colloquium asked me to make some observations about facts that I found interesting in this colloquium. The strongest impression of the colloquium before it started was that is very provoking to bring together three disciplines that are so different: Old Testament exegesis, Hebrew semantics and cognitive linguistics. Of course, these disciplines should share some interest, because they all deal with language and interpretation. But are the traditions in the different disciplines not so heterogeneous that the disciplines as they have been developed in their own traditions have nothing to say to each other? The strongest impression after the colloquium is that we have been observing a convergence at least on some common problems. The different disciplines do have something to say to each other, although the surplus value of the interdisciplinary interaction should still be substantiated.

As a relative outsider, being as experimental psycholinguist but with an interest in linguistics, I necessarily will present a partial and biased view of the colloquium. And in particular, I do not pretend to indicate the directions in which the different disciplines should go.

The question that intrigued me most during the colloquium was: What can cognitive linguistics contribute to text understanding and text interpretation and, for that matter, to text interpretation by exegetes and non-exegete readers. Cognitive linguists consider language as an expression of cognition. Accordingly, cognitive linguistics pays much attention to a number of phenomena in text and discourse that all have to do with the relation between language and human cognition. The theories that describe these phenomena can be considered as different chapters of cognitive linguistics. I'll mention a few of the phenomena that have been discussed during this colloquium.

A notion that has been discussed explicitly or implicitly during the whole colloquium is representation. What is meant by this notion is that readers

in understanding a text build a mental representation of the content of the text. Representation is the end product of the interpretation process. The important characteristic of this mental representation is that the representation does not only contain what is explicitly expressed in the text, but also contextual information and world knowledge that the reader activates in understanding. The representation is not a representation of the text, but a representation of the state of affairs in the world, described by the text. This concept of representation occurs in cognitive linguistics as well in other branches of linguistics under different names and slight differences in meaning: mental space (Fauconnier 1985, 1997), mental model (Johnson-Laird 1983), discourse domain (Seuren 1985), current discourse space (Langacker 2001), situation model (van Dijk and Kintsch 1983). For simplicity I will use the term mental model.

A consequence of the fact that a mental model contains world knowledge that is activated by the reader is that the meaning of a text goes beyond the semantics of the words that are used in the text. And indeed, the question arises of how far the meaning of a text goes. We have heard a discussion of this topic during the colloquium: How minimalistic or maximalistic does one conceive the linguistic meaning to be; how much inferences are part of the meaning of a text (Langacker, this volume)? Another consequence is that, in general, one cannot speak about a single interpretation of a text. Since readers activate world knowledge, and different amounts of knowledge, there is not one single fixed meaning.

Another aspect of the mental model is its dynamic character. It is constructed during reading, and it changes in the course of the text. Each new sentence updates the model. The meaning of a sentence is not considered in terms of truth conditions (the meaning of a sentence being those conditions that make the sentence true or false), but in terms of the change each incoming sentence or proposition effectuates in the representation. Words in a text are conceived of as instructions that change the representation. As examples, we have seen in this colloquium that conjunctions such as 'but' and 'and' and adverbs like 'almost' change the point of the interpretation the writer intends to convey (Verhagen, this volume).

Related to the dynamic character of mental models are the notions of figure and ground that take an important place in cognitive linguistics. The issue is that in each utterance something is the point of the communication and something is the background. This intuitively appealing distinction has been discussed under different names, e.g. topic and com-

ment; topic and focus, figure and ground. During the colloquium we have heard several analyses of Job 28 in terms of figure and ground. These notions are dynamic, as is the notion of mental model itself. What is figure and ground changes during the discourse. And this has an impact on the interpretation of the text, as we have seen (van Wolde, Kamp, this volume).

Related to the observation that mental models go beyond literal interpretation are the phenomena of irony and metaphors. Meanings are culturally dependent and contextually flexible, as is illustrated in irony (Geeraerts, this volume). Metaphor is a phenomenon that has been neglected for a long time in linguistics, until it received full attention by cognitive linguists. Metaphors make it very clear that the meaning of a text goes beyond lexical meaning. Metaphors are examples par excellence of a mapping between two domains, for instance, between the domains of mining, illumination, depth and space on the one hand and wisdom on the other hand, as we have seen (van Wolde, Greenstein, Van Hecke, this volume). The point is that in understanding a metaphor, we go beyond lexical semantics and we activate knowledge.

One phenomenon that is related to mental models but has received little attention in this colloquium is perspective. Perspective is the subjective point of view that is present in a text. This may be the point of view of the writer or of some character in the text. This point of view determines who is responsible for the information that is presented in the text. It determines the domain in which the information is valid. The phenomenon of perspective can nicely be represented by mental models. Each new perspective creates a new mental model in which information is valid. The embedding of perspectives, for instance, of a character and the writer, can be represented by the embedding of a mental space in another mental space. An illustration of the description of perspective in terms of mental spaces and its application to a biblical text has been given by Sanders (1994) and Van Wolde and Sanders (1994).

These phenomena, that can be described in terms of mental models, have been discussed not only in cognitive linguistics but also in psycholinguistics, where the focus is on the way in which readers understand a text and on the cognitive processes in real time in the head of the reader. Some characteristics of mental models received much attention in experimental psycholinguistics, in particular how readers update their representation of protagonists in the text, how they construct spatial and

temporal representations, and the representation of causality and intentionality (Zwaan and Radvansky 1998; Noordman and Vonk 1998).

In this respect, a remark should be made about 'the reader'. We have been discussing aspects of the reading and interpretation of Job 28. But who is this reader or interpreter? Certainly, we, exegetes and linguists, are readers. But most texts, including the bible, are not written to be read only by scholars. If the understanding of texts consists of the construction of mental models by the readers, it is worthwhile to investigate empirically this process not only for scholarly exegetes and linguists, but also for non scholar readers.

Cognitive linguistics brings the phenomena that I related to mental models and that are pervasive in all texts and discourses into focus and makes us sensitive for them. In addition, cognitive linguistics provides theories to describe these phenomena. One can say that cognitive linguistics provides tools to analyse texts and to describe their interpretations. By tools I refer both to the theories about phenomena that occur in text and to the analytic means to describe them. But these statements about cognitive linguistics should not be interpreted as implying that cognitive linguistics has developed ready made tools that can simply be applied in other disciplines, for instance, in exegesis. On the contrary, in this interdisciplinary research, there is definitely a challenge for cognitive linguistics too. Cognitive linguistics should make it clear that its tools can be applied, and in particular cognitive linguists should demonstrate that their analyses have a surplus value; that it makes a difference if the cognitive linguistic tools are used in analysing texts. This colloquium has shown several examples of this surplus value, as I have briefly indicated. The interdisciplinary cooperation between cognitive linguists and exegetes will force cognitive linguists to articulate their theories so that they indeed might yield a surplus value for exegetes. In that sense, the interdisciplinary research can be beneficial both for cognitive linguists and exegetes.

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- 01 כִּי יֵשׁ לַפֶּסֶף מוֹצֵא
02 בְּרִזְלֵי מַעְפָּר יִקַּח
03 קֶץ שָׁם לַחֲשֶׁךְ
04 פֶּרֶץ נַחַל מַעַם-גֵּר
05 אֶרֶץ מַמְנָה יֵצֵא-לָחֶם
06 מִקוֹם-סִפִּיר אֲכִינִה
07 נָחִיב לֹא-יָדְעוּ עֵיט
08 לֹא-הִדְרִיכֶהוּ בְּנֵי-שָׁחַץ
09 בַּחֲלָמִישׁ שֶׁלַח יָדוֹ
10 בַּצִּוּרוֹת יְאֹרִים בִּקְעָה
11 מִבְּכֵי נְהִירוֹחַ חֲבֹשׁ
12 וְהִתְקַמָּה מֵאֵין חֲמָצָא
13 לֹא-יָדַע אָנוּשׁ עֶרְכָּה
14 תְּהוֹם אָמַר
 לֹא בִי-הִיא
 וַיֵּם אָמַר
 אֵין עֲמָרִי:
15 לֹא-יִתֵּן סִגּוֹר תַּחְתִּיהָ
16 לֹא-חֲסִלָּה בְּכֶחֱם אוֹפִיר
17 לֹא-יַעֲרֹכְנָה זָהָב וְזָכוּכִיחַ
18 רָאמוֹחַ וְגִבִּישׁ לֹא יִזְכָּר
19 לֹא-יַעֲרֹכְנָה פֶטֶר-כּוֹשׁ
20 וְהִתְקַמָּה מֵאֵין תְּבוּאָה
21 וְנַעֲלָמָה מַעֲיָנִי כָל-חַי
22 אֲבִדּוֹן וְנֶמֶחַ אָמְרוּ
 בְּאַזְגִּינוּ שְׁמַעְנוּ שְׁמָעָה:
23 אֱלֹהִים הִבִּין וִירְכָה
24 כִּי-הוּא לִקְצוֹחַ-הָאָרֶץ גִּבִּיט
25 לַעֲשׂוֹחַ לְרוּחַ מִשְׁקַל
26 בַּעֲשָׂחוֹ לַמָּטָר חֶקֶץ
27 אִזּוֹ רָאָה
 הַכִּינָה
28 וַיֵּאמֶר לְאָדָם
 הֵן יִרְאֵחַ אֲדֹנָי הִיא חֲקֻמָּה ׀
 וְסוֹר מִרְעֵה בִּינָה:

01 Surely there is a mine for silver, and a place for gold to be refined.
 02 Iron is taken out of the earth, and copper is smelted from ore.
 03 Miners put an end to darkness, and search out to the farthest bound the ore in gloom
 and deep darkness.
 04 They open shafts in a valley away from human habitation; they are forgotten by travel-
 ers, they sway suspended, remote from people.
 05 As for the earth, out of it comes bread; but underneath it is turned up as by fire.
 06 Its stones are the place of sapphires, and its dust contains gold.
 07 That path no bird of prey knows, and the falcon's eye has not seen it.
 08 The proud wild animals have not trodden it; the lion has not passed over it.
 09 They put their hand to the flinty rock, and overturn mountains by the roots.
 10 They cut out channels in the rocks, and their eyes see every precious thing.
 11 The sources of the rivers they probe; hidden things they bring to light.

12 But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?
 13 Mortals do not know the way to it, and it is not found in the land of the living.
 14 The deep says,

‘It is not in me’,

and the sea says,

‘It is not with me.’

15 It cannot be gotten for gold, and silver cannot be weighed out as its price.
 16 It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, in precious onyx or sapphire.
 17 Gold and glass cannot equal it, nor can it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold.
 18 No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal; the price of wisdom is above pearls.
 19 The chrysolite of Ethiopia cannot compare with it, nor can it be valued in pure gold.

20 Where then does wisdom come from? And where is the place of understanding?
 21 It is hidden from the eyes of all living, and concealed from the birds of the air.
 22 Abaddon and Death say,

‘We have heard a rumor of it with our ears.’

23 God understands the way to it, and he knows its place.
 24 For he looks to the ends of the earth, and sees everything under the heavens.
 25 When he gave to the wind its weight, and apportioned out the waters by measure;
 26 when he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the thunderbolt;
 27 then he saw it and declared it;
 he established it, and searched it out.
 28 And he said to humankind,

‘Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
 and to depart from evil is understanding.’

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